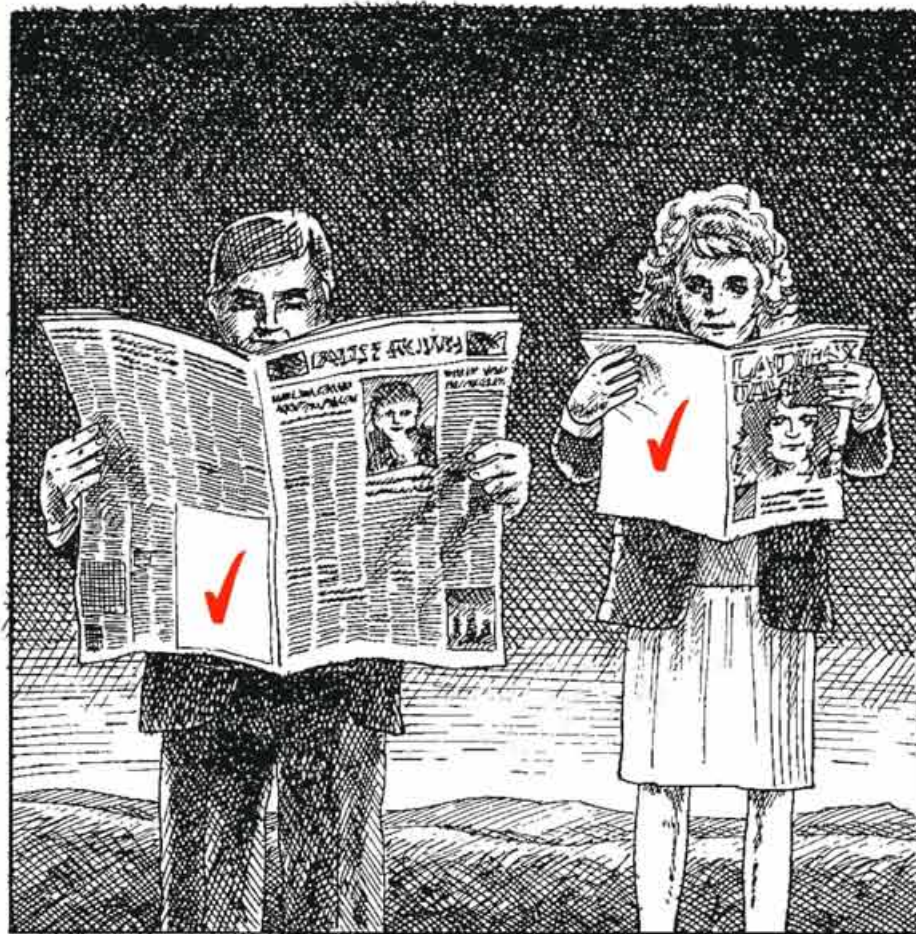

The Advertising Standards Authority



Annual Report 1983-84

The Advertising Standards Authority is an independent body, with an independent Chairman and Council. It is financed from a levy on advertising costs which is collected by the advertising business. It is the job of the ASA to keep advertising standards high and to see that advertisements comply with the British Code of Advertising Practice.

The Authority's remit extends to advertisements in the press, magazines, brochures, the cinema, on video tapes, posters and transport.

The Advertising Standards Authority Annual Report 1983-84

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ASA Ltd
Brook House
2-16 Torrington Place
LONDON WC1E 7HN

MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

List of Serving Members
as at 31st March 1984

CHAIRMAN

Professor Lord
McGregor of Durris

MEMBERS

Dame Josephine
Barnes, DBE, FRCP,
FRCS, FRCOG

M. C. J. Barnes, Esq.
MA

Lady Elizabeth
Cavendish, MVO, JP

E. G. Court, Esq.

Professor the Rev. G. R.
Dunstan, MA, DD, FSA

A. M. Fisher, Esq. MA

The Baroness
Lockwood

Patricia Mann,
FIPA, FCAM

A. E. Pitcher, Esq.
FIPA, FCAM

Rachel Waterhouse,
CBE, PhD

All members serve as
individuals and not as
representatives of any
industry or trade or
professional
association.



DAME JOSEPHINE BARNES, DBE, FRCP, FRCS, FRCOG. Consulting Obstetrician and Gynaecologist, Charing Cross Hospital and Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Hospital. President Women's National Cancer Control Campaign. Vice-President, Medical Defence Union. President, British Medical Association 1979-1980. Hon. Fellow, Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford. Member of the Warnock Committee on in vitro fertilisation. December 1980*



M. C. J. BARNES, MA. Marketing consultant. A member of the Direct Mail Services Standards Board and Chairman of the Housing Action Centre, North Kensington. Formerly MP (Labour) for Brentford and Chiswick 1966-74, a member of the National Consumer Council 1975-80 and Chairman of the Electricity Consumers' Council 1977-83. January 1979*

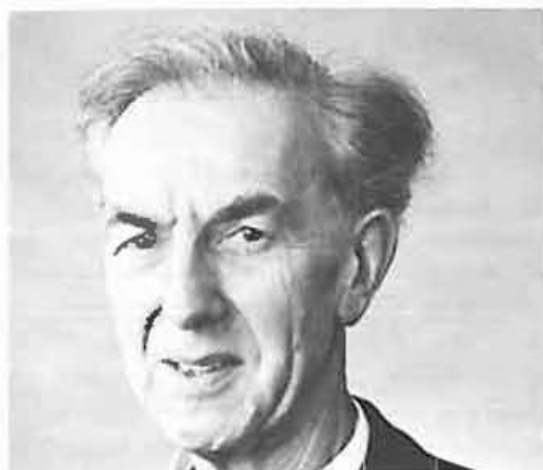


LADY ELIZABETH CAVENDISH, MVO, JP. Chairman of the Cancer Research Campaign. Chairman of the Inner London Juvenile Court. Chairman of the Wandsworth Juvenile Court. November 1981*



E. G. COURT, ESQ. Chairman of IPC Magazines Ltd. until 1981. Director of Periodical Publishers Association 1972-79. Member of Council of Audit Bureau and Circulation 1972-79. March 1979*

*Date of appointment as member of the Council.



PROFESSOR THE REV. G. R. DUNSTAN, MA, DD, FSA. Emeritus Professor of Moral and Social Theology in the University of London. August 1981*



PATRICIA MANN, FIPA, FCAM. Head of External Affairs, J. Walter Thompson Group (UK). Vice-President, J. Walter Thompson International. Director, Woolwich Equitable Building Society. Council of Brunel University. Governor, Henley Management College. June 1973*



A. M. FISHER, ESQ. MA. Consultant. Director of ASBOF 1981. Chairman of the Code of Advertising Practice Committee 1973-75. February 1976*



A. E. PITCHER, ESQ. FIPA, FCAM. President of Ogilvy and Mather Limited, London. Chairman of CAM Education Foundation Limited. Vice-President of the International Advertising Association and its European Area Director. Member of the International Advertising Association's World Board of Directors and World Council. March 1979*



THE BARONESS LOCKWOOD. Founder Chairman of the Equal Opportunities Commission 1975-83. President of Birkbeck College. Council member of Hillcroft College. Council member* of Bradford University. August 1983*



RACHEL WATERHOUSE, CBE, PhD. Chairman, Consumers' Association. Member, National Consumer Council. A Vice-President of the National Federation of Consumer Groups. Member, National Economic Development Council. Author of books on the local history of Birmingham. November 1980*

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

POLITICAL ADVERTISING

Political advertising has been a main topic of discussion at Council meetings throughout the year. Early in 1983, Lord Hale urged in the House of Lords that the BCAP should be extended to cover Government advertising concerned with defence. I took the opportunity provided by that debate to explain why such a proposal would be unacceptable to the ASA. The Code (1.4) explicitly excludes from its ambit certain types of advertisements "concerned with matters of political, religious, social or aesthetic controversy" provided that the advertiser's identity is clearly stated. The reason for these exclusions is that the Authority cannot adjudicate upon



such claims in an acceptable manner. The Code requires advertisers to have available before offering an advertisement for publication substantiation for all descriptions, claims and comparisons which relate to matters of objectively ascertainable fact. Such substantiation is required to be presented to the Authority upon demand. In many advertisements concerned with matters of political controversy, adjudications would be no more than statements of the Authority's beliefs, prejudices or preferences. Moreover, it would be an impertinence, besides being a folly, on the part of the Authority if it were to attempt to adjudicate upon matters of political doctrine or policy, which are the direct concern of political parties and of Parliament.

I think that it is beyond dispute that no other approach is open to the Authority in respect of advertisements which seek to influence people to adopt a belief or point of view and which are by definition incapable of substantiation. The very notions of truth or factual accuracy or dishonesty or fairness would bend in the hands of those who sought to deploy them in adjudicating upon this type of controversy. Inevitably, if the ASA were to make the attempt to deal with political advertising on the same footing as that on which it handles commercial advertising, it would lose credibility as a quasi-judicial institution and come to be seen as a partisan body giving reign to political or other sorts of prejudice.

Nevertheless, if this argument be accepted, two very serious questions still have to be answered. In the first place, the Code subjects commercial advertisers to severe restraints. Even if it is impracticable to deal similarly with political advertisers, is it right to give them a licence, however theoretical, to print untruths with impunity? In the second place, it must be stated that, among those frequently complained against, under this section of the Code voluntary bodies formed to promote the 'rights of animals' stand out. These organisations have learned the lesson that, if an advertisement is framed in such a way that it falls under the exclusion clause, anything goes.

Accordingly, Council has given much time and thought to a difficulty which in many ways goes to the roots of the Authority's principles and procedures. Council has clarified the principles upon which its work is undertaken. When called

upon to take a view about advertisements which set out controversial opinions, Council holds that it should begin from a presumption in favour of freedom of expression. That presumption would be rebuttable only if it could be shown that there is a risk of significant harm arising as a result of an advertisement. Such harm might take the form of a threat to the legitimate interests of another; the exploitation of the vulnerable; the infliction of emotional shock or the occasioning of moral offence; or, more impalpably, but at least as importantly, the destruction of the means of communication through the devaluing of common symbols, or the weakening of trust.

Council cannot avoid confronting serious issues of public concern on the ground that the Code excludes the subject from its jurisdiction. On the other hand, there are areas within which it cannot adjudicate. These two seemingly conflicting requirements will be met by an alteration in the wording of the Code and by changes in the Authority's procedures when dealing with excluded advertisements. The CAP Committee has been working for some time on a revision of the Code, and it is expected that the new version will be ready for publication in 1985. I shall deal further with the subject in my *Annual Report* next year.

MONITORING

The census of publications to which I referred in last year's *Report*, was taken in May 1983. Some 250 publications were included in a stratified sample from a total of about 2,200 publications. The stratification included all national and regional daily newspapers and all national Sunday newspapers. In addition, the sample covered one-fifth of regional weekly newspapers, one-tenth of free newspapers and 5% of consumer magazines.

The census has shown that the distribution of advertisements by type over the range of the frequency and scope of publication is markedly homogeneous between such groups as national and regional daily newspapers. However, there are considerable differences among the publications within each group. As the socio-economic characteristics of the readership in which advertisers are interested have a significant effect upon these differences, the Authority must base its sample upon the types of advertising carried by the publication rather than upon the frequency of

publication. Further, the sample should reflect the full influence of an advertisement upon the public as indicated by the circulation of the publication. Therefore, the greater proportion of the sample will be drawn from publications with larger circulations.

A preliminary and very encouraging finding of the census was that between 1% and 2% of printed advertisements were in breach of the Code of Advertising Practice. However, in the final analysis only about 1 in 10 of such breaches are sufficiently significant to be pursued. Thus, each week the Authority's monitoring discloses 4 or 5 advertisements that could be in serious breach of the Code.

These new results confirm the general reliability of the Authority's present monitoring procedures. Accordingly, the improved sample will not result in any dramatic change in our assessment of the degree to which the Code is observed although it will provide better measurements of the efficacy of the Code generally and in respect of particular categories of products and services.

The Authority's new system gives four main advantages. First, it provides a sampling frame which gives more effective coverage of publications at a significantly lower cost in staff time. Second, it sets a firm statistical criterion against which the Authority can check the efficiency of monitoring. Third, it suggests improvements in the existing classification of data that will in turn extend the usefulness of the existing computer. Finally, it will enable the Authority to respond flexibly to the changing needs of the general public and advertisers for information from the Authority about the practice of advertising by, for example, the use of rolling samples or trend analysis. The Authority is most grateful to its adviser on statistics, Mr. R. A. Pluck, for the care and skill with which he has analysed and met our needs.

CASE REPORTS AND EDITORIALS

Last summer, the Authority published the hundredth issue of *Case Report* in which the editorial explained that the then Chairman, Lord Tweedsmuir, had insisted on the publication of complaints. He wrote in his *Annual Report* for 1972-73 that "the Authority is clear that only by a policy of greater openness can it meet, as it should, the growing demand in all spheres for greater accountability". In 1982, after

some hesitation, the CAP Committee adopted Lord Tweedsmuir's policy and began to publish the complaints that it receives. As in the earlier experience of the Authority, publication by the Committee, far from producing embarrassments, has resulted in strengthened relationships with the advertising business and with the public. In my last *Annual Report* I drew attention to the errors which can arise from treating fluctuations in the number of complaints as anything more significant than a measure of the propensity of the public to complain in any period of time, and I indicated that the development of our monitoring programme would soon require a decision as to how its findings might best be published. The time for that decision is approaching and it is likely to be taken in time to be reported in my next *Report*.

The *Case Reports* began in 1973 as no more than a few pages of typescript. When the first editorial appeared five years later, the importance of the *Reports* was enhanced and they began to provide a running commentary on the Authority's duties, anxieties and attitudes as these emerged in the course of interpreting the advertising and sales promotion Codes. I know that the plain speaking editorials are esteemed and found to be helpful by the industry and the media. They also serve and will continue to be used by the Authority as a convenient means of making

statements of policy. In the recent past, editorials have dealt with such recurring and controversial issues as appeals to fear, the treatment of women in advertisements, slimming and the use and misuse of statistics.

TREATMENT OF WOMEN IN ADVERTISEMENTS

The Authority continues to receive complaints about the publication of advertisements which some groups regard as offensive to women. Two years ago we published the findings of our own survey of the views of a representative national sample of women, entitled *Herself Appraised: The Treatment of Women in Advertisements*. This did not reveal the widespread dissatisfaction with advertisements among women generally which is assumed in many polemics on the subject nor did it yield any evidence whatsoever in support of arguments that the BCAP should be changed. In a recent pamphlet, *Images of Inequality: The Portrayal of Women in the Media and Advertising*, the TUC declares its intention of "continuing to pressurise the ASA to alter its Code of Practice to provide some guidance on the depiction of women in advertising to take into account social change". In fact, guidance on where the boundaries lie between legitimate freedom of expression is regularly given to relevant adjudications by



Chairmen and Council members who have served the Authority since 1962 were photographed in the Cholmondeley Room at the House of Lords during the reception to celebrate the 21st birthday of the ASA.

Left to right back row:— David Williams, A M Fisher, Alistair Sedgwick, G E Taylor, Alan Campbell Johnson, Lord Thomson, Lord McGregor, Lord Tweedsmuir, Lord Drumalbyn, Charles Buck, Brian McCabe, Howard Thomas, A E Pitcher, Rev Paul Flowers, Michael Barnes.

Left to right seated:— Patricia Mann, Rosemary McRobert, Rachel Waterhouse, Kay Evans, Dame Josephine Barnes, Lady Lockwood, Gabrielle Pike.

Council upon complaints, and published in the monthly *Case Reports*.

It is, however, no part of the function of the Authority, as we explained in *Herself Appraised*, to use the enforcement of the Code as a means of promoting social change, however desirable; though commonsense suggests, and observation confirms, that advertisers, no doubt moved by an awareness of where their commercial interest lies, will always be ready to adjust their appeals as the sensitivities of their audiences change.

VIDEO MAGAZINES

Since 1981 the Authority has paid a great deal of attention to video magazines. We have upheld a number of complaints, several made to us by the British Videogram Association itself, and we welcomed the initiative of the editors of the small number of magazines in the field who set up a committee with the object of upholding the Code in respect of advertisements for video films. The CAP Committee wrote to all its members and I sent a personal letter in the summer of 1983 to the owners or Chairmen of the magazines. I wrote in the fiercest terms stating that the Authority would not tolerate the continuance of advertisements appealing to sadism. Since then, the magazines have been kept under constant review. So far, sadistic advertisements have not reappeared.

TWENTY-FIRST BIRTHDAY

The first Council meeting of the Authority in September 1962 was celebrated after the twenty-first meeting on 7 October 1983 when Lord Drumalbyn cut a birthday cake.

So that those members who had served on the Council since it was established could meet again and join in the celebration, a reception was arranged at the House of Lords on 1 March 1984 for them, for present members of the Council and for others intimately involved with the work of the Authority.

There was much talk of past and present with exchange of reminiscences and stories of early case decisions. Everyone enjoyed themselves so much that it has been decided to make such an occasion a regular feature of the Authority's social calendar.

CAP CHAIRMAN

I draw the attention of readers to the *Report* of the Chairman of the CAP Committee, Mr. Colin Sandford, who completes his first year in this important office. The Authority is particularly glad to know that the Association of Free Newspapers has joined the Committee, and welcomes the additional strength which the adherence of Free Newspapers gives to the control system.

At the 21st birthday reception in the House of Lords, the four chairmen who have held office since 1965 met Council members who served with them. Left to right: Lord Tweedsmuir, Lord McGregor, Lord Drumalbyn and Lord Thomson.



It is my pleasure once again to express the gratitude of the Authority to all those periodicals and newspapers which have donated so much space that our advertising has acquired the standing of a major campaign. We are also much indebted to the generosity of the cinema industry. As in recent years, I thank Mr. Christopher Hawes, the Chairman of Davidson Pearce, and Mr. Stephen Benson for their achievements on our behalf.

This year, the Authority welcomed Lady Lockwood as a member of Council. She was the founder Chairman of the Equal Opportunities Commission and is a leading commentator on the status and social situation of women. We are grateful that she is willing to find time from her many other activities to strengthen the Council with her advice.

On behalf of the Council, I thank the

Director-General and his colleagues for their conduct of the work of the Authority. The wider diffusion of knowledge among the public, and also among Members of Parliament, about its services as well as a steadily growing influence in its field of activity have meant year by year that greater burdens fall upon the staff. These have been carried without any increase in numbers and undoubtedly represent a considerable improvement in productivity, achieved, no doubt, in part by better methods of working and office equipment. Nevertheless, mechanical aids cannot be substitutes for the care and accuracy over detail and courtesy towards members of the public on which the confidence in the Authority of those who use its services is ultimately based. Council is very appreciative and proud of the competence and dedication of its staff.

Mr. Gregory J. Dennis

CAP YEAR

CODE OF ADVERTISING PRACTICE COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

When I first became involved with the work of the CAP Committee some two years ago, I held the general belief that in the complex and fast moving world of advertising, self regulation must be preferable in principle to a system where standards of conduct are controlled only by the cumbersome and inevitably long winded processes of the law. Closer acquaintance has strengthened that conviction and I have come to see that the self-regulatory system is not only relatively speedy and efficient but, above all, that it is generally fair to all concerned. It is for this reason, I believe, that it has now for many years enjoyed the committed support of the vast majority of both advertisers and publishers. If I have a concern it is that, despite an energetic campaign of education and public relations, the principles and processes of self regulation are not better understood by a number of those who are professionally involved in advertising.

Any system which relies on mutual respect and self interest will inevitably be subject to occasional abuse. It is therefore not surprising that, since the Committee decided in 1981 to publish the findings of its investigations of complaints, a small number of advertisers have attempted to make use of the complaints procedure to achieve commercial advantage rather than to resolve genuine disputes. In a few instances undue publicity has been given to the fact that a complaint has been lodged, and a small number of complaints have clearly been made solely with a view to embarrassing competitors or denigrating their products. It was particularly a matter of concern that on one or two occasions, advertisers sought to give publicity to Draft Case Reports, which are in effect the Secretariat's recommendations to the Committee, rather than the findings of the Committee itself. These problems have been thoroughly discussed and the Committee concluded that the seeking of publicity by advertisers for commercial gain must be discouraged but cannot be wholly prevented. However, the Committee takes the view that its first duty is to preserve the integrity of the self regulatory system and it therefore reserves the right to make appropriate comments on its findings

when it believes that malicious or petty complaints have been brought.

During the year we welcomed into membership of CAP the Association of Free Newspapers, whose Annual Conference I was privileged to address in September. The Committee and its Secretariat also maintained a constructive dialogue with other bodies not in membership of CAP, including the Direct Mail Services Standards Board and the British Videogram Association. The industry is fortunate that the Committee has a dedicated and experienced Secretariat whose advice is willingly given on an informal basis to any organisation or company which is concerned with the content of advertisements.



The review of the British Code of Advertising Practice is now well under way. Those parts of the Code which have become outdated or anomalous are being re-written or removed, and the opportunity will be taken to review many of the day to day procedures associated with the Code's administration. The British Code of Sales Promotion Practice has now been all but re-written under the able supervision of the Sub-Committee Chairman, 'Jeph' Jephson. A few points of detail remain but I can see no reason why publication of the revised Code should not take place shortly.

In re-writing both these documents, account has been taken of the advice of my predecessor, John Jackson, that we should concentrate on the broad important issues and resist the temptation to strive for a legalistic accuracy of wording. Above all, we must produce a Code which is intelligible to the lay reader and which can be used as a practical working guide by those involved in advertising. Clarity of concept and a reasonable precision of wording are

The Parliamentary Under Secretary for Corporate and Consumer Affairs, Mr. Alexander Fletcher, MP, visited ASA in November and saw the work of the various departments before meeting senior secretariat members. In the sales promotion office he is with (left to right) Peter Thomson, Lord McGregor and Enid Cassin.

important but, at the end of the day, the system must depend on the acceptance by advertisers and by the community as a whole of the principles and standards of self regulation.

C. W. Sandford *Chairman*
Code of Advertising Practice Committee

FINANCIAL ADVERTISING SUB-COMMITTEE

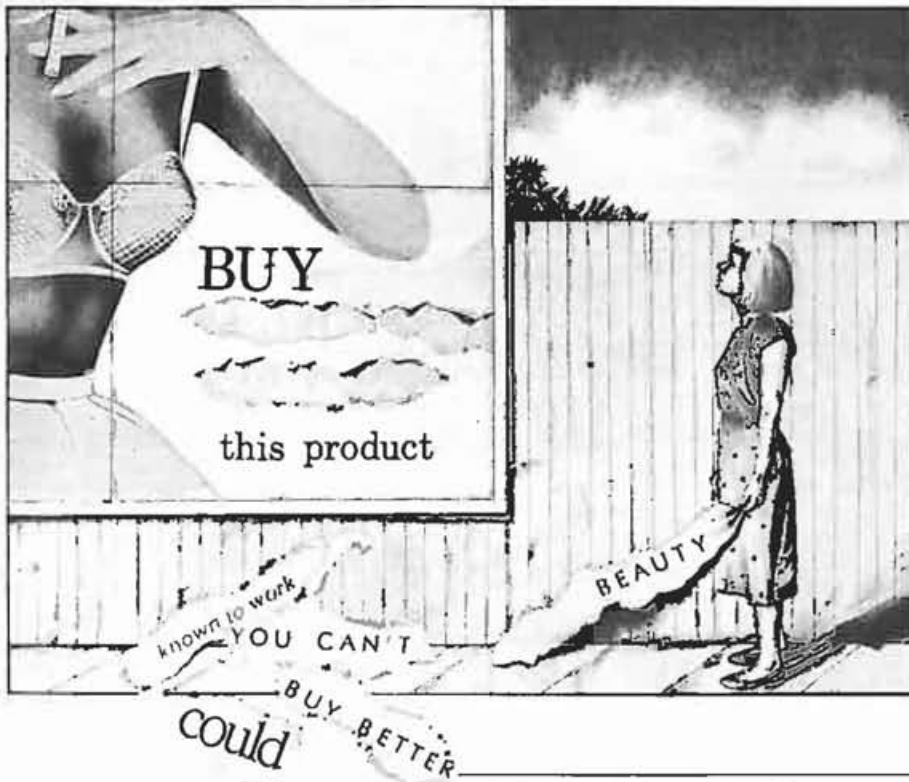
Chairman: Mr. Clive Fenn-Smith. Throughout the year the Sub-Committee assisted the Secretariat in interpreting the requirements of the Code Appendix E in relation to a wide range of financial and investment advertisements. Particular attention was given to the quotation of interest rates for investment returns, the use of the phrase 'tax free' and forecasts or projections of specific growth rates or returns on investment. (A review of Appendix E will be undertaken in 1984.)

opportunity was taken to extend the scope of Appendix F in the light of experience gained since its original drafting, and to clarify the distinction between goods and services offered through the mail and in published advertisements. The Sub-Committee reviewed the guidance also given to advertisers in respect of the Committee's requirements and those of media in relation to goods sold off the page. In addition the Sub-Committee also took note of and watched developments in the field of mail order in general: the setting up of the Mailing Preference Scheme, whereby the public could request names to be taken off, or included on, mailing lists; the Direct Mail Services Standards Board, which had strengthened the implementation of the Code in certain areas; and the review by the office of Fair Trading of the mail order protection schemes run by the major media bodies, the NPA, NS and PPA.

HEALTH AND NUTRITION SUB-COMMITTEE

Chairman: Mrs. G. L. S. Pike. The Sub-Committee began its work on those sections of the Code under its remit: Section IV and the Appendices related to Slimming, Medical and Allied Areas, Hair and Scalp Products, and Vitamins and Mineral Products. The review of legislation related to the Advertising of Medicines to the Public and to the Labelling of Food was noted, and through the Secretariat the Sub-Committee continued to maintain regular contact with both the Department of Health and the Ministry of Agriculture.

The constructive and helpful assistance received from both Government Departments on matters related to the Code was appreciated. Discussions also took place with the British Medical Association with particular reference to advertisements for cosmetic surgery and 'alternative' therapies. The Sub-Committee regularly gave advice on the interpretation of the Code and among topics kept under scrutiny were the advertising of surgical and clinical procedures, laser therapy, slimming products, techniques for hair transplantation and re-positioning, and health claims for non-medical products. The Sub-Committee drew to the attention of the media members of the CAP Committee, the views expressed by the professional bodies on the Warnock Committee on the subject of 'Surrogate Motherhood' (in vitro fertilisation and womb-leasing).



Some possible contraventions of the British Code of Advertising Practice were pointed out by Bill Butcher in his cartoon to illustrate Peter Douglas's article on "How to Read an Advertisement" in Good Housekeeping magazine.

MAIL ORDER AND DIRECT RESPONSE SUB-COMMITTEE

Chairman: Mr. Kevin Holland. The work of the Sub-Committee was primarily concerned with a revision of the Code Appendix F, giving the opportunity to review the scope and format of the Appendix to ensure that its future provisions would adequately reflect developments in mail order and direct response advertising. Consequently, the

SALES PROMOTION SUB-COMMITTEE

Chairman: Mr. F. R. Jephson. A comprehensive review of the British Code of Sales Promotion Practice, begun in 1982, was completed for publication during 1984. The Chairman expressed his thanks to all the members of his Sub-Committee which had split into working parties to review particular sections of the Code. Although serving as individuals the members reflect a wide spectrum of experience as initiators of sales promotions, intermediaries in sales promotion practice and as purchasers of promotional goods. Included in the review was an expansion of basic principles and advice on promoting to the trade, together with clarification of sections dealing with Availability of Goods and Promotions with Prizes. Concurrently with the review the Sub-Committee assisted the Secretariat with the day to day application of the Code and also, on behalf of the ASA, continued the duty of overseeing the sales promotion monitoring programme. This programme led members of staff to visit 97 locations through the country. 1,961 items were purchased which represented 1,023 individual promotions examined, with 191 enquiries being raised disclosing 127 breaches of the Code. The following centres were covered: Scotland; Tyne Tees; Yorks; North West; Midlands; East Anglia; South West; West; Wales; South East and London. Additionally, a considerable amount of guidance on the Code was given at the planning stage of promotions both by telephone and in meetings with promoters and their agencies. There were 128 written submissions for copy guidance.

COMPLAINTS AND COPY ADVICE

During the year the Committee received 1,132 intra-industry complaints of which 307 gave cause for investigation under the Code. 247 complaints were upheld in whole or in part; 60 were found not to involve contraventions of the Code. 592 complaints were not pursued and 161 were withdrawn by complainants. 72 cases were ongoing.

There were 888 written submissions to the Secretariat for copy advice in general areas of advertising in addition to the very many telephone calls which are dealt with on a daily basis. Additionally, 274

certificates of clearance were issued for cigarette advertisements. Although a precise figure cannot be kept for telephone enquiries, a nominal check on calls and subject matter shows that, taken with the written submissions of copy, the areas in which advice is sought most frequently are alcohol, cars, cosmetics/toiletries, finance and investments, hair products and treatments, therapies, slimming, health and medicinal advertisements.

During the year the Copy Panel met on seven occasions. Efforts are being made to encourage greater use in appropriate cases of the facilities provided by the Copy Panel, particularly for the resolution of disputes over the interpretation of the Code. The Panel is not intended to provide an appeals procedure and it cannot preempt the decisions of the Advertising Standards Authority, but it can help to underline and reinforce the self-regulatory nature of the system, and thereby remove the mistaken suspicions that occasionally arise of there being an overly bureaucratic approach to the enforcement of the Code.

CHAIRMAN'S WORKING PARTY ON THE REVIEW OF THE CODE

This met on six occasions. The principles on which it is conducting its review are explained in the Chairman's Report. Among the matters to which particular attention has been given are the need for the Code to explain clearly and fully the genesis and way of working of the system and especially its multiple interfaces with the law.

THE SOCIETY OF FILM DISTRIBUTORS

All press advertisements, posters and front of house photographs or films in the "18" category are scrutinised before use by the SFD Advertisement Viewing Committee. The CAP Committee (and the British Board of Film Censors) have advisers on the Committee.

In 1983, 87 press and poster advertisements and 576 front of house photographs were submitted for approval. Most were approved with only minor changes but some re-submission of final artwork was requested and 20 amendments were required prior to final approval.

National Press Campaign

ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN

DO ADVERTISEMENTS SOMETIMES DISTORT THE TRUTH?

The short answer is yes, some do. Every week hundreds of thousands of advertisements appear for the very first time.

Nearly all of them play fair with the people they are addressed to.

A handful do not. They misrepresent the products they are advertising.

As the Advertising Standards Authority says in its booklet *What Makes an Advertisement Misleading?*

If a tanning cream had turned a 7 stone working man into a 14 stone bodybuilder, it would be advertised because it can be proved. But a promise to build you into a 14 stone man would have to show how the muscles, because the promise could not always be kept.

Makes you look younger might be a reasonable claim for a cosmetic.

But pledging to take years off your life would be an overclaim about a promise of eternal youth.

A garden centre's claim that its seedlings would produce a crop of colour in just a few days might be quite contrary to the reality.

Such false promises could be said to be pulled out by the roots.

If a brochure advertised a holiday being 2 minutes walk to the beach, it must not require an Olympic athlete to do it.

As for the sign of the firm's bank looking the next day, it would be nothing for it but to show that it did not.

HEAVY DO WE JUDGE THE ADS WE LOOK INTO? Our yardstick is The British Code of Advertising Practice.

Its 500 rules give advertisers precise practical guidance on what they can and cannot say. The rules are also a gauge for media owners to assess the acceptability of any advertisement they are asked to publish.

The Code covers magazines, newspapers, cinema commercials, brochures, leaflets, posters, circulars posted to you, and now commercials on video tapes.

The ASA is not responsible for TV and radio advertising. Though the rules are very similar, they are administered by the Independent Broadcasting Authority.

WHY IS IT A TWO-WAY PROCESS? Unfortunately some advertisers are unaware of the Code, and breach the rules unwittingly. Others, however, deliberately ignore the rules.

That is why we keep a continuous check on advertising. But because of the sheer volume, we cannot monitor every advertiser all the time.

So we encourage the public to help by telling us about any advertisements they think ought not to have appeared. Last year over 7500 people wrote to us.

WHAT DO WE DO TO ADVERTISERS WHO DECEIVE THE PUBLIC? Our first step is to ask advertisers who

we or the public challenge to back up their claims with solid evidence.

If they cannot, or refuse to, we ask them either to amend the ad or withdraw them completely.

Nearly all agree without any further argument.

In any case we inform the publishers, who will not knowingly accept any ad which we have decided contravenes the Code.

If the advertiser refuses to withdraw the advertisement he will find it hard if not impossible to have published.

WHOSE INTERESTS DO WE REALLY REFLECT? The Advertising Standards Authority was not created by law and has no legal powers.

Not unusually some people are sceptical about its effectiveness.

In fact the Advertising Standards Authority was set up by the advertising business to make sure the system of self control worked in the public interest.

For this to be credible, the ASA has to be totally independent of the business.

Neither the chairman nor the majority of ASA Council members is allowed to have any involvement in advertising.

Though administrative costs are met by a levy on the business, no advertiser has any influence over ASA decisions.

Advertisers are aware it is as much in their own interests as it is in the public's that honesty should be seen to prevail.

If you would like to know more about the ASA and the rules it seeks to enforce you can write to us at the address below for an abridged copy of the Code.

The Advertising Standards Authority

If an advertisement is wrong, write here to put it right.

ASA Ltd, Dept. E, Brook House, Torrington Place, London WC1E 7HN

ASA Ltd, Dept. E, Brook House, Torrington Place, London WC1E 7HN

ASA Ltd, Dept. E, Brook House, Torrington Place, London WC1E 7HN

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In 1983, our advertising campaign was highly visible once again. This caused some readers to ask how we could afford such expenditure. The truth is that we have a modest publicity budget which provides a modicum of paid-for space; the rest — and particularly all the many small space advertisements which form such a regular part of the advertising columns of so many papers and magazines — all this is entirely due to the generosity of media owners and publishers, who donate these spaces to our campaign. This year, as in previous years, we thank them wholeheartedly.

Throughout the year, our campaign had two objectives; to encourage greater and wider understanding of the work of the ASA and to demonstrate the effectiveness of the self-regulatory system.

MAIN CAMPAIGN

As in previous years, the target audiences for our main campaign have been "opinion formers" and the general public. To the first group, large space advertisements in daily and Sunday newspapers and leisure and special interest magazines presented a series of challenging

DO SOME ADVERTISERS GO TOO FAR TO ATTRACT YOUR ATTENTION?

Every week hundreds of thousands of advertisements appear for the first time.

Some stand out from the multitude by virtue of their relevance, wit or charm.

Others for less reliable reasons. It is one job of the Advertising Standards Authority to ask into any advertisement that happens again.

HOW FAR CAN AN ADVERTISER GO? This is a vexed question because sometimes there is a very fine line between what is above board and what is below the belt.

One rule in our Code says: Advertisements should contain nothing which is likely, in the light of generally prevailing standards of decency and propriety, to cause grave or widespread offence.

There is no doubt at all what we would do with an ad which may offend someone being taken alive.

But what if it is an advertisement which will offend the reader as yet little child?

A few people might regard it as offensive, but not, we think, the majority.

Although the phrase is of biblical origin, it has slipped into common usage as a metaphor for the sceptical.

PREVENTING UNDESIRABLE TACTICS. Another rule states: Advertisements should not contain any material which is likely to cause offence.

What is justifiable, and what isn't? Ages we take the view we think the majority would.

We might regard an ad acceptable if it showed how a woman and her children were able to survive in the grounds of her deceased husband's life insurance.

While offering an answer to a question problem it doesn't in itself induce fear.

But suppose a secretary from a bank is through this post that said he is charged, and I can get into your house — only to this leaflet.

This could terrify an older person living alone, and we would do every

thing within our power to put a stop to it.

WHO CAN WE THROW THE BOOK AT? The British Code of Advertising Practice covers newspapers, magazines, cinema commercials, leaflets, posters, circulars posted to you, and now commercials on video tapes.

WHAT DO WE DO TO THE ADVERTISERS? If we decide there has been a breach of any rules we ask the advertiser to amend the advertisement. If he cannot, or refuses, we ask him to withdraw it completely.

Nearly all agree without further argument.

In any case we inform the publishers, who will not knowingly accept any ad which we have decided contravenes the Code.

If the advertiser refuses to withdraw the advertisement he will find it hard if not impossible to have it published.

CAN ADVERTISERS PUSH US AROUND? The ASA was not created by law and has no legal powers.

Not unusually some people are sceptical about its effectiveness.

In fact the ASA was set up by the advertising business to make sure the system of self control generally worked in the public interest.

For this to be credible, the ASA has to be totally independent of the business.

Neither the chairman nor the majority of ASA Council members is allowed to have any involvement in advertising.

Though administrative costs are met by a levy on the business, no advertiser has any influence over ASA decisions.

Advertisers are aware it is as much in their interests as the public's to uphold advertising standards.

If you would like to know more about the ASA and the rules it seeks to enforce you can write to us at the address below for an abridged copy of the Code.

The Advertising Standards Authority

If an advertisement is wrong, write here to put it right.

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DO SOME ADVERTISERS GIVE YOU TOO MANY FACTS AND TOO LITTLE INFORMATION?

It is not difficult to find yourself bewildered by some.

Some advertisers are so wrapped up in their own jargon they fail to realize that to most people it's nothing more than a jumble of words.

But how can you be sure the facts and figures you read are accurate? And how can you tell if an overabundance of them is not just a waste of time?

WRITING OUT THE WHATSITFROM THE CHAFF. The answers lie in a book of rules called The British Code of Advertising Practice.

It is our job as the Advertising Standards Authority to administer these rules.

When through lack of space his knowledge the public could be led astray, the advertiser should not proceed.

In financial advertising a good example is the rules state: advertisements must take into account that the complexities of finance may well be beyond the people to whom the ad is addressed.

An investment of money direct response has to include a good deal of explanatory writing.

For instance, past growth of 500% in 5 years would have to be qualified by the next five years to which it referred.

And all investment ads have to carry warning to the effect that the value of investments and the income from them, if quoted, can go down as well as up.

WHEN ONE AND ONE MAKES SIX. In protecting the public from being misled we are often accused of being pedantic.

We see no need to object that a car with a 1400 engine had been described as a "1500".

"People in the know" might accept this as normal. But on complaint pointed out that his employer's policy allowed for a 15% for engines over 1400.

What we do not like to see is a trade person for a firm, and we were pleased that the advertiser amended the ad to include the exact engine size in the text.

READING BETWEEN THE LINES. It is not enough for a building society to promise "worth 10 95% to basic rate income tax payers" when the actual interest rate can fluctuate. This must be made clear.

A hed manufacturer should not merely advertise that his equipment develops a certain number of spins.

Since there are several different ways of measuring sound output, he should state which method he used and give the reader a fair basis for comparison.

And as for computers it is not fair to advertise what a speed of operation would do.

WHAT WE DO TO THOSE WHO BREAK THE CODE. If we decide there has been a breach of any rules we ask the advertiser to amend the advertisement.

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So we encourage the public to help by telling us about advertisements they may not have spotted. Last year over 7500 people wrote to us.

Every complaint is considered and if necessary submitted to our experts before we make a ruling.

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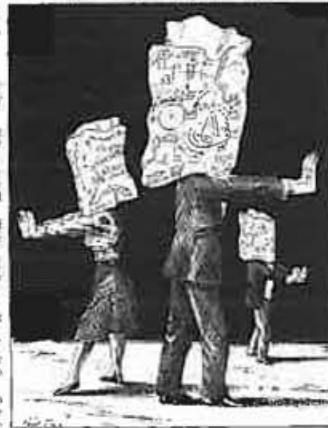
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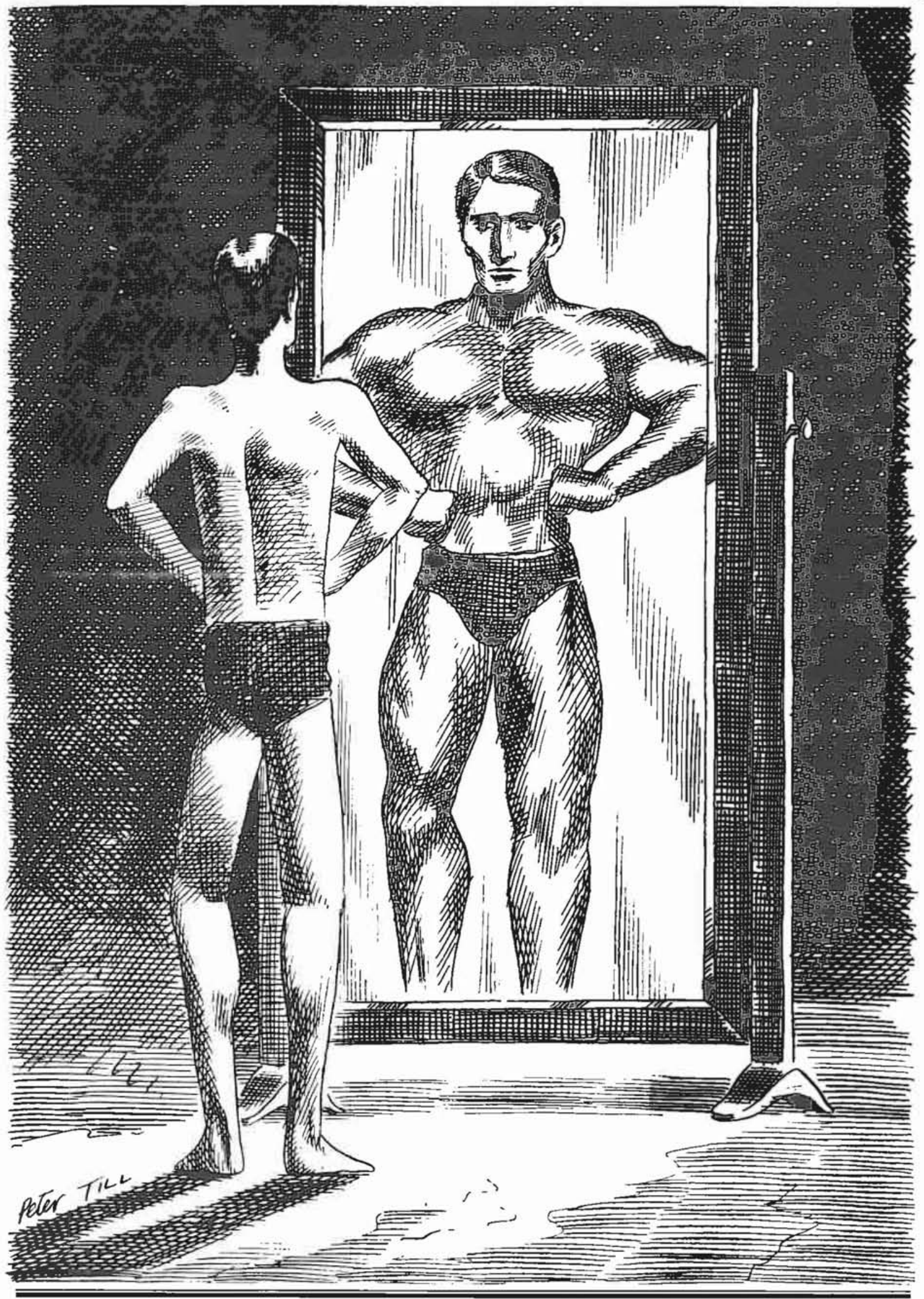
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Peter Till

TAKEN REGULARLY IT CAN PROTECT YOU FROM NASTY COMPLAINTS.



The better thinking will be the British Code of Advertising Practice.

It now runs to around ninety pages, and not surprisingly some advertisers are finding it difficult to swallow.

Others simply ignore it and take the risk that no one will notice. That is when their work becomes our responsibility.

As the Advertising Standards Authority it is our job to uphold the standards set by the Code.

If we spot an ad that contravenes it, or if a member of the public makes a complaint, the ball is in our court.

We may ask the advertiser to amend the ad.

We may even ask him to withdraw it completely.

Needless to say this can cause him a great many problems, not to mention considerable expense.

But if he had taken the trouble to consult the Code in the first place he could have avoided them.

(If he was still in any doubt he could have consulted the CAP committee.)

We don't wield the big stick because we enjoy asserting ourselves over hapless advertisers.

We do it to protect the public, which is the job the ASA was set

up to do by the advertising industry itself.

It's worth considering the alternative.

Do you want the ASA to continue providing its responsible self-regulation?

Or would you prefer tighter legal controls?

Copies of the Code are easy to get hold of, just send £1.00 to the address below.

As any doctor will tell you, prevention is always better than cure.

The Advertising Standards Authority
If an advertisement is wrong, we're here to put it right.

ASA Ltd, Brook House, Torrington Place, London WC1E 7HN

DOES THE ASA TAKE SOME COMPLAINTS TOO SERIOUSLY?



Last year we received 2690 complaints from the public.

Of these about a third needed to be investigated.

Every month our findings on these complaints are published in a Case Report.

People tell us that many of these complaints are about matters of no importance.

The fact is that the majority involve incorrect statements of fact, or misleading comparisons.

And it was the advertising business that gave us the job of weeding out these offenders and keeping advertising standards high.

If we believe there's a case to

answer we ask you, the advertiser or the agency to defend the ad.

This might mean prodding submissions for a claim you've made.

Or it might involve some lengthy discussions on the creative approach you've adopted.

At best, the complaint may prove to be unfounded.

At worst, your ad may need to be revised or even withdrawn.

A lot of extra work, perhaps.

over something as tiny as a detail in a piece of the body copy.

But to repeat, it's our job to prevent the appearance of misleading advertisements.

That's why we suggest you keep a copy of the Code in your office and familiarise yourself with its contents.

It will certainly help you get the ASA's role into perspective.

The Advertising Standards Authority
If an advertisement is wrong, we're here to put it right.

ASA Ltd, Brook House, Torrington Place, London WC1E 7HN

The Advertising Standards Authority. Freespace Production Service.

This folder contains fifteen advertisements in various sizes to be cut out and used as artwork. The advertisements can be enlarged or reduced to fill any available space. If solid black areas are not acceptable, please lay the appropriate screen on the reverse panel.

For letterpress publications please produce blocks as returned and invoice our advertising agents - Davidson Pearce Ltd, 67, Brompton Road, London SW3 1EF - quoting the publication, size of block and ASA Freespace.

Publishers are kindly requested to restrict the reproduction of any of these advertisements to one per issue.

It's easy to complain about an advertisement. Once you know how.

Any of the ways we keep track of the advertising that appears in the press or posters and in the cinema is by responding to consumer complaints. Any complaint will be investigated carefully and, if there's a case to answer, a full investigation is made.

If you think you've got good reason to complain about an advertisement, send off for a copy of our free leaflet. It will tell you all you need to know to help us process your complaint as quickly as possible.

The Advertising Standards Authority
If an advertisement is wrong, we're here to put it right.

ASA Ltd, Brook House, Torrington Place, London WC1E 7HN

It's easy to complain about advertisements. But which ones?

Every week millions of advertisements appear in press or posters in the cinema.

Most of them comply with the rules and we never have to investigate them.

But some of them break the rules and we do investigate them.

If you've seen one of these, send us a copy of the Advertising Code and we'll send you an abridged copy of the Advertising Code.

There's an advertisement number on it, you'll be pleased to be bothered by.

The Advertising Standards Authority
If an advertisement is wrong, we're here to put it right.

ASA Ltd, Brook House, Torrington Place, London WC1E 7HN

If an advertisement is wrong, we're here to put it right.

The Advertising Standards Authority

If an advertisement is wrong, we're here to put it right.

The Advertising Standards Authority

questions, "Do advertisements sometimes distort the truth?", "Do some advertisers go too far to attract your attention?", "Do some advertisements give you too many facts and too little information?"

When we are talking to the general public, our most important aim is to tell people that the ASA exists and how to make use of it. It is small space advertisements that, for the most part, perform this task. For example: "It's easy to complain about an advertisement once you know how" offered a free leaflet on "Do's and Don'ts of complaining"; another advertisement offered an abridged copy of the Code.

POSTERS AND CINEMA

ASA posters based on our "opinion former" campaign were to be seen in the London Underground and our new cinema commercial 'Mona Lisa' was distributed nationally, thanks to the generosity of Rank Screen Advertising and Pearl & Dean Ltd.

ADVERTISING BUSINESS CAMPAIGN

"Does the ASA take some complaints too seriously?" was the message in a new large space advertisement addressed to the advertising business; this reminded advertisers and others that the trouble to which they were put from time to time in responding to ASA enquiries was not wasted since it under-pinned the success of the self-regulatory system.

EFFECTIVENESS

The 1983 advertising campaign produced 3,160 general enquiries and requests for literature in direct response to the advertisements. It also played a part, no doubt, in the maintenance of the level of public complaint at the high level set in 1982.

CASE REPORTS

EDITORIALS

Twelve Case Reports were published during the year under review; editorial subjects ranged from communication breakdown ("Nobody Told Us" Case Report 99) through a review of the work of the Code of Advertising Practice Committee (Case Report 105), guidance on the application of Section 5.9.3 of the British Code of Sales Promotion Practice, which is concerned with the availability of goods (Case Report 96), to an introduction to the work of the Health and Nutrition Sub-Committee (Case Report 102) and an exposition of the Code's policy on comparative advertising (Case Report 106). Case Report 97, which set out the Authority's policy on political advertising appeared, by coincidence, but very fortunately, shortly before the General Election. We also celebrated our hundredth issue with a review of some of the matters that had been dealt with in the preceding ninety-nine editions.

"IN THIS ISSUE"

On the front page of each Case Report, the "In this Issue" column provides a means of drawing attention to particular issues raised by cases reported that month. During 1983, concern was voiced over some aspects of recruitment advertising, misleading prices, failure to provide substantiation for claims, the fear induced by too many advertisements for security systems and the particular problem of advertising by estate agents.

ASA's "It's Easy to Complain" leaflet has reached Cedric and Percival in the Sunday Express cartoon by Iain Reid and Fiddy.



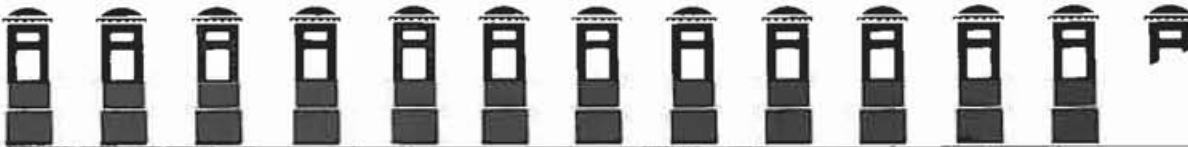
PUBLIC COMPLAINTS ANALYSIS

In 1983 the Authority received 7,548 complaints, thus maintaining the high level of complaints recorded in the previous year.

Of the 7,548 complaints received, 38.5% required investigation and of these 549 related to mail order delays. The remaining 2,362 complaints on copy points related to 1,248 different advertisements.

TOTAL RECEIVED

1981: 6,145



1982: 7,690



1983: 7,548



Key:

TV/Radio

Complaint about broadcast advertisements not covered by BCAP; passed to IBA.

OR

Outside remit, e.g. complaint not about content of advertisement, but about behaviour of advertisers.

NJ

No case to investigate; no apparent breach of the Code.

MO

Mail Order.

AI(NP/P)

Already investigated. (Not pursued/pursued.)

MD(NP/P)

More details required. (Not pursued/pursued.)

SUMMARY OF COMPLAINTS RECEIVED: JANUARY-DECEMBER 1983

MONTH	TOTAL	NOT PURSUED						PURSUED				
		TV	OR	NJ	AI (NP)	MD (NP)	NP TOTAL	MO DELAY	AI COPY (P)	MD (P)	(P) TOTAL	
JANUARY	582	38	54	113	73	54	332	72	102	41	35	250
FEBRUARY	657	28	73	132	93	73	399	53	114	62	29	258
MARCH	731	32	91	133	127	67	450	52	119	80	30	281
APRIL	546	22	75	133	74	59	363	38	81	31	33	183
MAY	577	33	54	129	84	55	355	31	88	81	22	222
JUNE	597	18	70	156	98	41	383	35	94	60	25	214
JULY	518	26	62	110	58	69	325	30	84	33	46	193
AUGUST	616	15	83	160	69	55	382	38	94	73	29	234
SEPTEMBER	546	22	72	120	66	61	341	43	83	50	29	205
OCTOBER	711	34	81	163	88	89	455	35	130	45	46	256
NOVEMBER	762	40	75	148	107	95	465	54	134	61	48	297
DECEMBER	705	22	83	127	65	90	387	68	125	82	43	318
TOTAL	7548	330	873	1624	1002	808	4637	549	1248	699	415	2911

COMPLAINT INVESTIGATIONS

Case Reports 95-106 dealt with 2,072 cases (599 mail order delays; 1,473 copy investigations).

Of the 1,473 copy investigations, 1,045 (70%) related to complaints which were upheld either wholly or in part. In the great majority of these cases, the advertisers concerned gave the Authority their assurance that the offence would not be repeated. Nonetheless, it was necessary in 31 cases to ask the CAP Committee to draw the circumstances to the attention of its media members. 21 of these requests resulted either from the advertiser's failure to respond to the Authority's initial enquiries or from his unwillingness to accede to the Authority's request for an assurance that the offending advertisement would not be repeated. Ten cases were drawn to the attention of the CAP Committee because of the unsatisfactory substantiation provided for the advertiser's claims.

Of the 599 mail order delay investigations, 433 were resolved by receipt of goods or refunds being paid. The circumstances regarding 54 advertisers were drawn to the attention of CAP media bodies by the Committee.

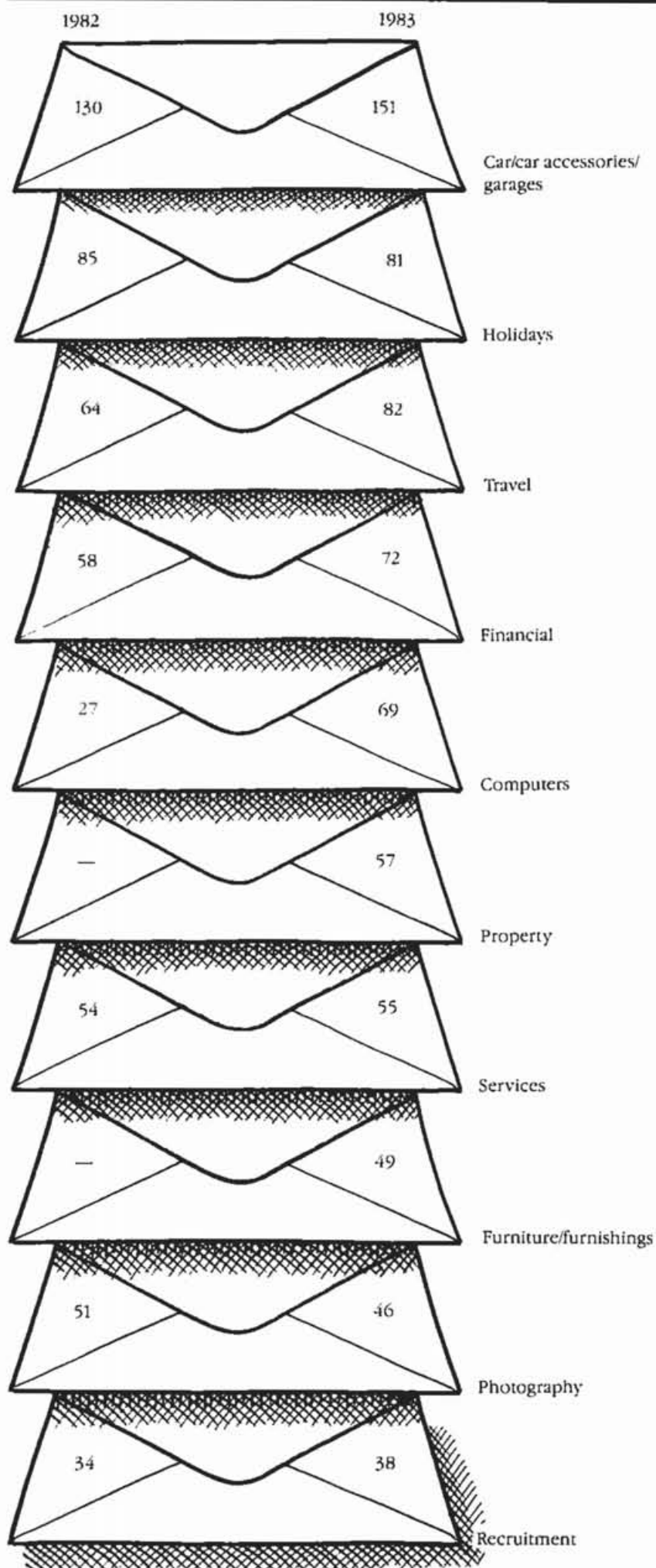
MEDIA BREAKDOWN

The vast majority of complaints made to the Authority arose from advertisements in the national or provincial press and magazines. However, some related to other printed material (leaflets, circulars, brochures, sales promotional material posters, etc.). Cinema commercials, which also come within the scope of the British Code of Advertising Practice provoked only one complaint which required investigation.

Breakdown of CR96 — 106 complaints

Press:	1,191
(National Press:	460)
(Local Press:	424)
(Magazines:	123)
(Specialist Press:	161)
(Trade Press:	23)
Leaflets:	163
Brochures/Catalogues:	86
Directories:	10
Posters:	21
Cinema:	1

TOP TEN COMPLAINTS



ANALYSIS BY PRODUCT GROUPS

The range of products which figured in complaint investigations in 1983 remained as extensive as ever — from antiques to videos, and baby products to hearing aids. As in previous years, however, the sector which gave rise to most complaints was car and motor accessory advertising. Travel and holiday advertisements accounted for the next highest number of complaints, but were closely followed by financial and — for the first time — computer advertisements; a development which we viewed with some concern.

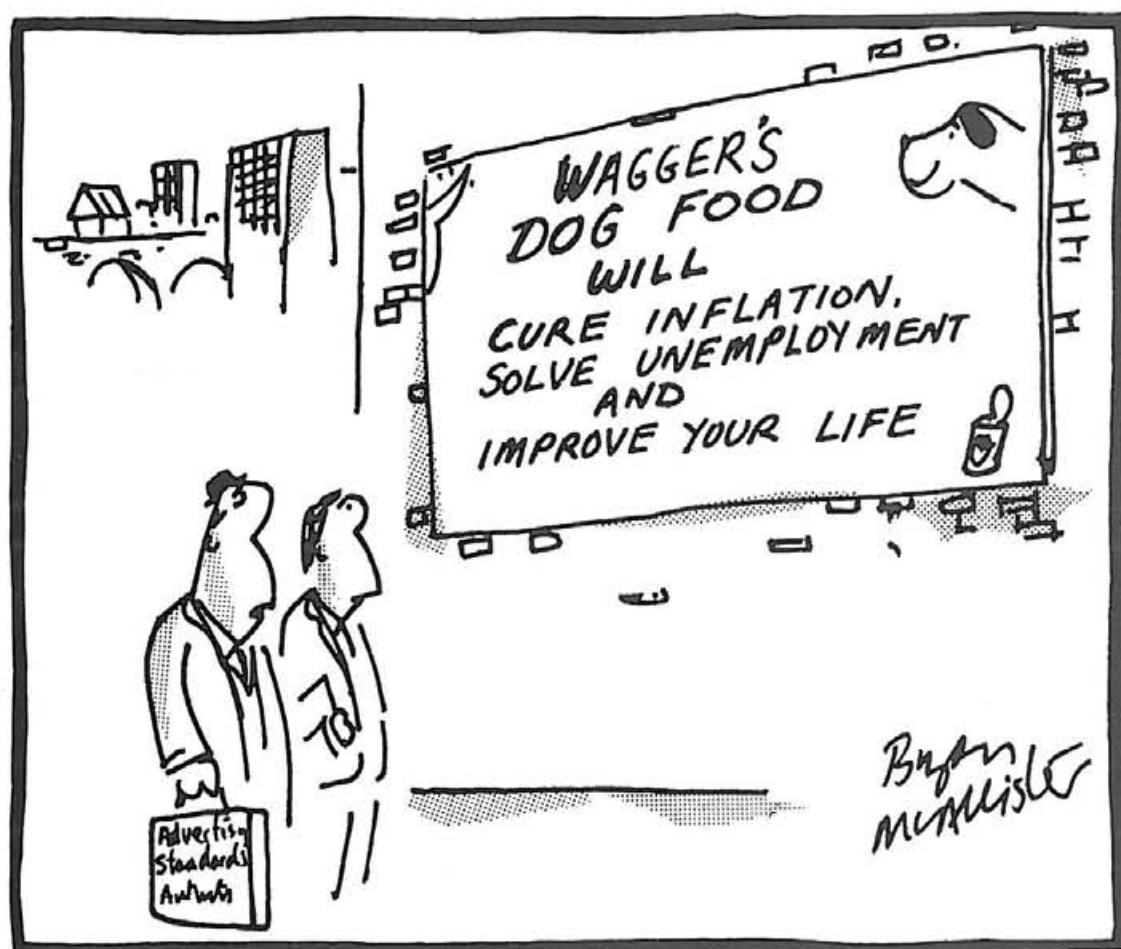
ANALYSIS BY CODE PROVISION CONTRAVENED

Of complaints which were upheld (whether wholly or in part) the chief sections of the Code involved were:

- II.4.2. (misleading advertising): 350
- II.4.1. (claims not substantiated): 168
- II.4.3. (prices not as advertised): 77
- III.3. (advertised goods not available): 54

Section II.11 (unfair comparisons) accounted for 22 upheld complaints and Section II.5 (unjustifiable appeal to fear) resulted in a further 18. In all, 49 different provisions of the Code were contravened.

Complaints upheld under the British Code of Sales Promotion Practice totalled 72 (98 complaints investigated under this Code).



An article on political advertising in 'Ideal Home' prompted this cartoon by Bryan McAllister. Reproduced by kind permission of Ideal Home magazine.

EXTERNAL RELATIONS

PRESENTATIONS AND VISITS

Wider range of audiences

An increase in the number of presentations on the work of the Authority in 1983 was largely the result of an increase in the number of invitations received from a wide range of organisations during the year. January saw our first presentation at the BDMA Insurance Forum. This was followed in February by an evening with the Essex branch of the Institute of Marketing at Chelmsford and later with the Middlesex and Herts Life and Pensions Society. Moor Hall, Cookham was the venue in April for an evening with 33 branch chairmen of the Institute of Marketing and other IM guests. ASA speakers addressed the Centenary Congress of the Co-operative Women's Guild at Worthing and the North London Federation of Townswomen's Guilds. The Annual Conference of the Institute of Trading Standards Administration Conference was addressed by both the Chairman and the Director General. At the Conference of the Association of Free Newspapers, Colin Sandford, Chairman of CAP, gave the keynote speech.

Other seminars, conferences, meetings and discussions attended and addressed by members of the Council and staff included:

January

Manchester Polytechnic, Business Studies Lecture
Glasgow Herald Centenary

February

Barclaycard Sales Conference

March

Women's National Commission
Cosmetic, Toiletry and Perfumery Association
Scientific Seminar
IPA Information on Advertising Seminar
ISBA Press Advertising Committee

April

Direct Mail Services Standards Board

May

FIPP (International Federation of the Periodical Press) Conference, Brussels
BDMA Workshop, London
ADEX SOUTH-WEST, Bristol
AIG Seminar, Stratford-upon-Avon (Advertising Information Group)

June

Newspaper Society Advertising Conference, Brighton
Publicity Association of Northern Ireland
Scottish Daily Newspaper Society

July

Advertising Association Seminar, Peterhouse

September

Society of Public Law Teachers, Brunel University
UNESCO Conference, Talloires

October

International VIDCOM Conference, Cannes
UNESCO post-Talloires Conference, Paris
Schweizerische Kommission zur Überwachung der Lauterkeit in der Werbung, Zurich
Council of Europe, Strasbourg

November

National Federation of Women's Institutes



Enid Cassin talking with Kevin O'Doherty, Chief Executive and Secretary of The Advertising Standards Authority for Ireland, when ASAI executives visited Brook House in May.

National Council of Women
 UNESCO General Conference (Communications),
 Paris
 ZERP Workshop on non-legal means of consumer
 protection, Bremen University
 British Sign Association annual meeting
 History of Advertising Trust reception
 IAA Seminar on Public Service Advertising, Brussels
December
 European Food Law Association Seminar
 Federation Internationale des Editeurs de Journaux,
 Golden Pen of Freedom award
 Advertising self-regulation seminar, Asian Mass
 Communications Centre, Singapore

Schools, colleges, advertising agencies and consumer groups have been visited in the lecture programme. The majority of the 35 lectures were given by Diana Bird and Nicholas de Bois, and a feature on schools lectures appears in this report.

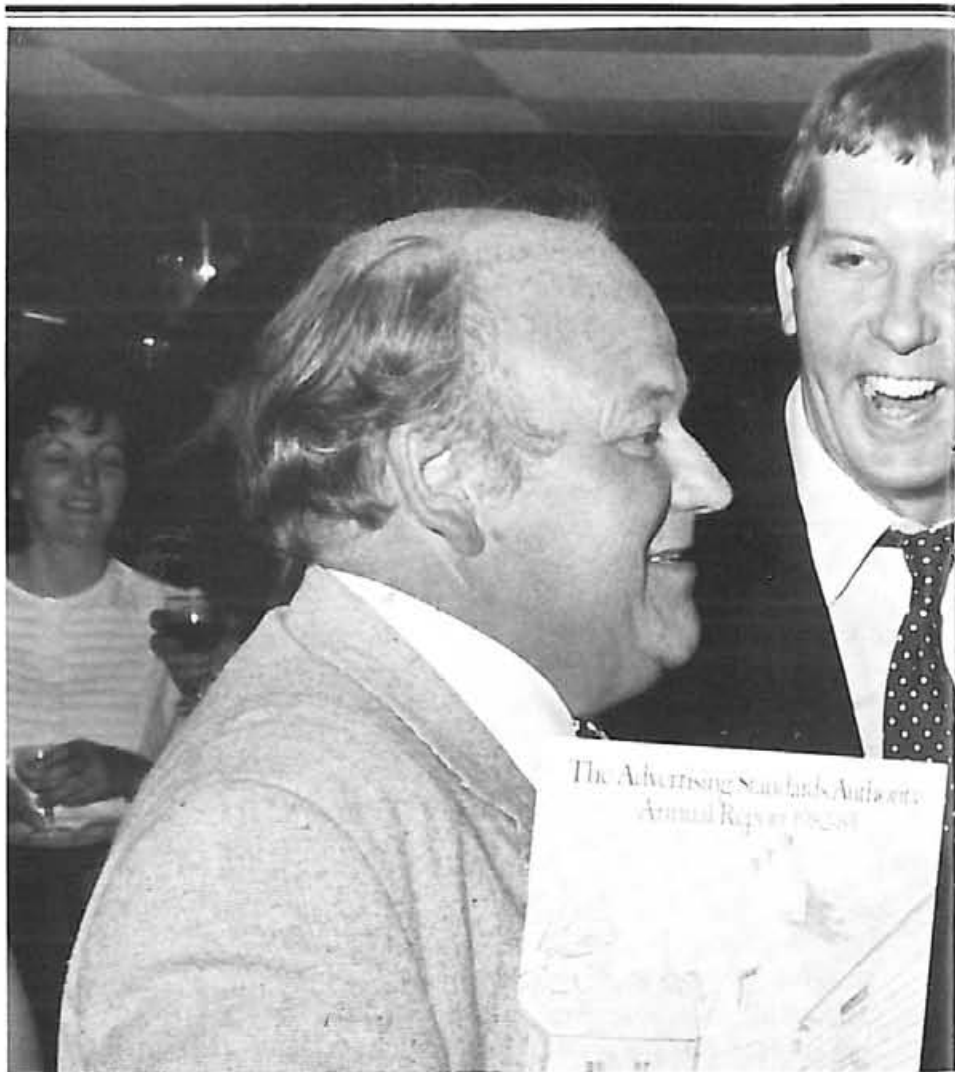
FILMS

On June 16th, our new film "Two Too Many", which won the bronze prize in the Information Films Section of the 1983 Berlin International Consumer Film Festival, was premièred at the Classic Cinema, Tottenham Court Road, in the presence of Lord McGregor, ASA Council members and an invited audience. By the end of the year it had received 55 cinema bookings on the commercial circuit. Free loan distribution through the Viscom film library had already started in the spring; such a high level of bookings was achieved that additional copies on film and video had to be added to stock three times during the year. Requests for copies of the film have been received from France, Singapore, Australia, Hong Kong, Canada and South Africa.

The success of the film has encouraged the Authority to commission a third film which will describe how the Code of Advertising Practice Committee works and how it serves the advertising business. In addition to "Two Too Many", our first film "A Question of Standards" remained on library loan. Bookings of the two films in film and video formats numbered 746 in the year, with an audience of 50,178.

CAM LECTURES

The first update to the lecture kits delivered, in 1981/82, to those colleges offering CAM (Communications, Advertising and Marketing Foundation) courses was distributed. A video cassette of "Two Too Many" and a set of notes and





Lord McGregor hosted a reception for the commercial première of "Two Too Many" at the Classic Cinema, Tottenham Court Road, London, W1, in June. Enjoying a joke about the film are stars Roy Kinnear and Chris Driscoll with Lord McGregor.



(Left) Daniel John, who plays Jimmy Brown in "Two Too Many" with Peter Thomson at the commercial première when Daniel was given a video copy of the film as a souvenir.

(Right) The bronze prize in the Information Films Section of the 1983 Berlin International Consumer Film Festival was won by the ASA film "Two Too Many". Lord McGregor has had it framed and hung on the boardroom wall at Brook House.

slides showing how the Code works in practice went to each college. Those colleges offering CAM courses for the first time received the original kit and the updated material. On November 19th the Authority gave a reception for the Association of CAM Teachers; this was addressed by the Chairman and the Director General.

Three new slide presentations for more general audiences were produced during the year. One highlights the main points of the British Code of Sales Promotion Practice; the second gives a guided tour of the structure of the self-regulatory system and is aimed principally at the advertising business. The third presentation is designed for general consumer audiences and will be reproduced on video in 1984.

When the ASA radio tape was being recorded, interviews were held in town centre streets. Diana Bird, with Ted Hooker of Silk Stream Productions, talks to a passer-by in London.



Lord Drumalbyn, PC, KBE, who served two terms as Chairman of the ASA, cutting the 21st birthday cake, watched by Lord McGregor.



In April the Institute of Marketing and the Authority organised a joint presentation at the Institute's headquarters, Moor Hall, Cookham. 150 guests attended and were addressed by Lord McGregor, Peter Thomson and David Williamson. Pictured in the lounge at Moor Hall are left to right: Tony Bushell, Institute of Marketing Director of Membership Services; Ian Cook, Sales Director, Syme Media Enterprises Ltd., Hong Kong; and Lord McGregor.



RADIO TAPES

To meet requests from local radio stations for information on the Authority's work, two radio tapes were produced and circulated. These have been used in over 30 broadcasts and will be updated for re-issue during next year.

PRESS COVERAGE

Comment on the research study "Herself Appraised" continued in 1983. The other activities of the Authority were reported on 1,138 occasions during the year. There were 33 television or radio interviews with Council members and ASA staff and 20 programmes contained reference to the work of the Authority or the self-regulatory system.

SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

In recent years the ASA has devoted much time to visiting schools and colleges in order to explain the work of the Authority and the safeguards provided by the self-regulatory system. This is in response to many enquiries from both pupils and teachers about the work of the Authority.

Invitations have come from a wide spectrum of schools: from Colindale Secondary Modern to Eton College. At most venues we have spoken to senior (Sixth Form) pupils in the framework of General Studies or Business courses.

Each talk includes a brief description of how the self-regulatory system originated and how it evolved into the present day organisation, followed by a longer review of the distinct functions of ASA and the CAP Committee plus an outline of the role of monitoring, copy clearance and, of course, the complaints procedure.

LIMITED KNOWLEDGE OF ADVERTISING CONTROLS

Pupils we have addressed are keenly interested in the subject of advertising, but while they display a fair degree of knowledge about how the industry works, their knowledge of controls is generally limited to the more obvious legal regulations.

It is our aim to fill this gap but we find that the concept of self-regulation through a code of practice is often greeted cautiously by students. It therefore forms the basis for considerable discussion. "Are we restricting the creativity of advertisers?"; "Do we really have any effective sanctions?"; we generally measure our success by the extent to which our answers to such questions satisfy our audience.

CASE HISTORIES

Our audio-visual equipment is a great help. Attempts to explain the Code paragraph by paragraph would be tedious, but audio-visual presentation gives us the chance to illustrate points via case histories. Students are thus able to see how we apply the Code in given instances and why. It is encouraging that in most cases they agree with the case conclusions.

As a rule we do not travel much

beyond a 100 mile radius of London. But schools from further afield often visit us. We generally conduct these meetings in the Board Room where we can accompany lectures with slides and complete the visit with a showing of the film "Two Too Many" which is always well received.

LITERATURE SUPPLIED

Everyone we talk to, whether at home or away, is provided with a supply of literature which summarises the salient points that have been discussed and which includes copies of the abridged British Code of Advertising Practice. Teachers write to us afterwards to tell us that these publications form the basis of many class discussions and projects about advertising.

More and more schools and colleges are becoming aware of a need for consumer education and we are pleased to be able to take an active part in answering this need. Our talks are gratifyingly well attended: whether this is simply because they come as welcome relief from the regular fixtures on the curriculum or not, is not for us to say! However, students appear to enjoy themselves thoroughly and we trust they feel they have learned something useful.

WALL CHART FOR 8-11 YEAR OLDS

Looking ahead, a wall chart will be distributed to schools throughout the country in 1984. It is aimed at 8-11 year olds and explains in comic strip form the process of complaining about an advertisement. The story line is adapted from our latest film "Two Too Many". In addition to this new feature in our education programme, we intend during 1984 to maintain our contact with schools and colleges through more talks and by replying to the regular stream of written enquiries that we receive daily.

Bronze Award Winner at Berlin Consumer Film Festival.

TWO TOO MANY

Starring
Roy Kinnear

A 16mm film produced for the Advertising Standards Authority by Viscom Production Ltd.
Available on Free Loan.



PUBLICATIONS

The following publications are available from the Authority.

They can be obtained by sending a cheque, postal order or stamps of the appropriate value to:

The Advertising Standards Authority Ltd.
Brook House
2-16 Torrington Place
London WC1E 7HN

Cheques should be made payable to The Advertising Standards Authority, and crossed. For free publications please send a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

	Collected	Posted
British Code of Advertising Practice (6th edition)	1.50	1.80
British Code of Sales Promotion Practice (3rd edition)	0.40	0.60
Annual Report	2.25	2.50
Children and Advertisements: A Research Study	35.00*	
Herself Appraised: A Research Study	75.00*	
The Advertising Standards Authority: What It Does and How It Works	Free	
The Do's and Don'ts of Complaining	Free	
It's Easy to Complain about Advertisements: But Which Ones?	Free	
The Code and Children	Free	
The Code and Slimming	Free	
The Code and Alcohol	Free	
Case Reports (published monthly)	Free	

*plus postage

FILMS

Two 16mm colour films, also available on VHS, Betamax and U-matic video cassettes, are available on free loan. They are "A Question of Standards" which describes the work of the ASA and "Two Too Many", a light-hearted look at two advertisement complaints involving one family.

Applications for these films and cassettes should be made direct to:

Viscom Audio Visual Library
Unit B11
Park Hall Road Trading Estate
London SE21 8EL

MONITORING

During 1983 the ASA's monitoring department followed the programme established in 1980 and outlined in detail in the 1981 Annual Report. The following pattern applies:

MONITORING PATTERN

NATIONAL DAILY NEWSPAPERS

— scanned at least twice per week on varying days.

NATIONAL SUNDAY NEWSPAPERS

— at least every alternate week.

SUNDAY COLOUR MAGAZINES

— each week.

REGIONAL DAILY & WEEKLY PRESS

— approximately 6-8 titles x 4 issues per month.

MAGAZINES

— all women's and general interest magazines with high circulation and a random selection of other publications available.

PRODUCT CATEGORIES

Additionally, the department obtains through a press cutting agency all published advertisements in specified product categories. These are chosen on the basis of areas of advertising causing general concern, or problems which become apparent during the course of routine monitoring. For example, each Spring, advertisements for slimming products proliferate; in 1983 the monitoring department examined 358 advertisements, of which 15 required detailed investigation. Another category of advertising where problems arise intermittently is photo-processing; during summer 1983, 501 advertisements were examined for possible breaches of British Code of Advertising Practice F.3.1 ('Mail order advertisements should clearly state in the body of the advertisement and not only in a coupon, if one is included, a full postal address at which the advertiser can be contacted during normal business hours') and BCAP F.5.1 ('All mail order advertisements should indicate the period within which the advertiser undertakes to fulfil orders. Except in the circumstances noted in the following sections of this paragraph, the period should not be greater than 28 days') of the Code. As a result of this exercise 26 apparent breaches were taken up with the advertisers concerned.

NUMBER OF CASES PURSUED

The total number of investigations pursued in 1983 was 237. The following table shows the source of these:

DAILY NEWSPAPERS	36	(TOTAL NO. OF COPIES SCANNED	830)
SUNDAYS	34	(TOTAL NO. OF COPIES SCANNED	322)
SUNDAY SUPPLEMENTS	11	(TOTAL NO. OF COPIES SCANNED	300)
MAGAZINES	112	(TOTAL NO. OF COPIES SCANNED	1101)
REGIONALS	36	(TOTAL NO. OF COPIES SCANNED	164)
LEAFLETS/CATALOGUES	8		
TOTAL	237	(TOTAL	2717)

The cases pursued related to the following categories and Code sections:

SUBSTANTIATION (II.4.1.)	88
POTENTIALLY MISLEADING (II.4.2)	29
MAIL ORDER (APPENDIX F)	30
HEALTH/TREATMENT/ADVICE (IV.8, APPENDIX D)	39
SLIMMING (APPENDIX C)	23
BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES (APPENDIX A.5.1/2)	7
TESTIMONIALS (II.4.7)	4
INVESTMENT (APPENDIX E)	16
LIMITED EDITIONS (APPENDIX A.9.4)	5
HAIR & SCALP (APPENDIX G)	8
SAFETY (II.9)	7
VITAMINS (APPENDIX K)	3
SUPERSTITION (II.6)	3
TASTE & DECENCY (II.2)	1

(N.B. Some advertisements fall into more than one category.)

In cases where substantiation was requested, 34 advertisers (39%) were able to satisfy the Authority that the requirements of the Code had been met. 184 (77%) agreed either to amend or withdraw the advertising material in question. The remaining 19 (8%) were drawn to the attention of CAP media members.

Comparing the 1983 figures with those of the previous year, a similar pattern emerges. There has, however, been an increase (of 11%) in the total number of publications scanned and a rise of 8% in the number of investigations undertaken.

It is worthy of note that the number of investigations that arose from advertisements monitored in national daily newspapers rose in 1983 from 16 to 36 whilst those that arose from local/regional press nearly halved from 70 to 36. The following table shows the difference:

No. of Publications Monitored	No. of Cases Initiated	
	1982	1983
DAILY NEWSPAPERS	808	830
SUNDAYS	269	322
SUNDAY SUPPLEMENTS	245	300
MAGAZINES	918	1101
REGIONAL/LOCAL NEWSPAPERS	192	164
LEAFLETS/CATALOGUES	—	—

It is envisaged that certain changes will be made to the monitoring programme in 1984 when we have received a report which is currently being prepared by a statistician appointed by the Authority. A sample census comprising some 250 publications has already been taken from

which a considerable amount of valuable data has been collected.

QUOTA MONITORING

The quota monitoring programme introduced in 1981 has been brought to a conclusion. During its 2½ years of operation some interesting work has been carried out, and topics have been investigated which would be unlikely to have arisen as a result of the Authority's casework or monitoring based on areas of operations that are known to be troublesome.

The advertisement sample used for the programme covered both local and national magazines and newspapers, and was based on the sample used by the Office of Fair Trading in their 1978 Review of Advertising.

1983 RESULTS

During 1983, 350 publications were studied and these yielded an advertisement sample of 1,745. After assessment of the individual advertisements, substantiation was sought from advertisers in 63 cases, under Section II.4.1 of the Code.

The results of these investigations break down as follows:

Claims substantiated	68% (43 cases)
Claims not substantiated	10.5% (7 cases)
Failure of advertiser to respond to enquiry	12.5% (8 cases)
Cases not yet concluded	8% (5 cases)

When compared with the results of the 1982 survey it is encouraging to note that the percentage of advertisers who failed to respond to the Authority's enquiries fell from 17% to 12.5%. However, the percentage of advertisers who were unable to substantiate fully their claims in accordance with the Code's requirements appears to have remained constant at around 10%. It is worth noting that the majority of these advertisers agreed to amend or withdraw their advertisements as soon as they were made aware of the point of conflict with the Code.

SALES PROMOTION MONITORING

During 1983, ASA staff examined 1,023 promotions and proceeded to investigate 191 of these. Of the 191, 78 cases involved prize or competition promotions (55 of them breached the Code), 51 were premium offers (29 breached the Code), 54

free offers (37 breached the Code) and 6 were savings/refund schemes (all of which breached the Code).

The type of products making up the 1,023 promotions examined were:

TYPE OF PRODUCT

Household Products = 82	Prize promotion/competition = 226
Toiletries = 102	Free offer = 427
Tinned & Packaged Food = 302	Premium offer = 193
Cereals & Bread = 81	Savings/refund scheme = 148
Dairy Produce = 48	Others = 29
Frozen Foods = 15	1023
Soft Drinks = 29	
Alcohol = 46	
Cigarettes & Tobacco = 6	
Infant & Medical = 23	
Leaflet, etc. = 289	
	1023

To gather examples of all these promotions our sales promotions shopping team visited a wide range of stores; 97 visits were made, on a monthly basis, to various locations in the following regions:

Scotland, Tyne Tees, London, Yorkshire, North West, Midlands, East Anglia, South West, West, Wales and South East.



"... AND FURTHERMORE, I'D LIKE TO COMPLAIN TO THE ADVERTISING STANDARDS AUTHORITY ...!"

Colin Whittock's comment on the announcement of British Airways redundancies appeared in the Birmingham Evening Mail.

FINANCIAL REPORT

FINANCIAL REPORT
The Advertising Standards Authority Ltd.
Expenditure Account for the year ended
31st December 1983

	<u>1983</u>	<u>1982</u>
	£	£
Expenditure :		
Salaries and staff costs	519,136	479,492
Rent and accommodation costs	133,841	154,719
Travel, subsistence and entertaining	31,685	33,264
Consultancy and professional fees	92,974	38,064
Council honoraria and expenses	9,276	8,108
Depreciation	8,540	7,224
Telephone, postage, printing, stationery, furniture and other general expenses	103,333	99,214
Advertising and promotion	898,785	820,085
	374,593	397,742
Excess of income over expenditure for the year	1,273,378	1,217,827
	£ 12,291	£ 2,481

Registered Office

The Advertising Standards Authority Ltd.
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 LONDON WC1E 7HN

01-580-5555

(Registered in England No. 733214)

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Gwenan Williams

David Williamson

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Angus Chalmers

Denis Cross

Ronald Dewar

Elise Drew

Ann George

Julie McGovern

Frances Morgan

Julie Richardson

Amelia White

ASA PUBLIC COMPLAINTS

Sarah Brand

Deborah Buller

Michele Carter

Paul Cecil

Jean Cole

Jess Edwards

Rosemary Hastings

Kate Newman

Linda Niksa

Carlene Pringle

Linda Wheeler

CAP

Matti Alderson

Michael Cowie

Pauline Jonas

Lois Lewis

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