

Windhoek ad called out for suggesting toxic masculinity

South Africa's Advertising Regulatory Board (ARB) has asked for the removal of an advertisement for Windhoek beer on the basis that it entrenches toxic masculinity in suggesting that "real men drink real beer".



Source: YouTube

The advertisement, which features actor Gerard Butler, opens in a bar, initially feeling like many traditional beer commercials. However, the mood changes when a character called Joe asks the waiter for a piece of lime to add to his beer.



Source: YouTube

According to [Business Insider South Africa](#), Joe "is a gentle looking, red-headed man – two characteristics that might typically make him a target for teasing in a toxic environment".

Gerard Butler is seated at the bar and says,

“ Hey! That's a Windhoek. That's 100% pure beer. You don't need any lime. See for yourself. ”



Source: YouTube



Source: YouTube

Joe then takes a sip of the beer - without lime - and clearly enjoys it.



Source: YouTube

TimesLive [reports](#) that Aadila Agjee lodged a complaint against Heineken South Africa on its marketing of Windhoek Lager. Agjee says the commercial is offensive in that "It belittles a man for requesting a lime slice with his beer."

The complaint states as follows, “The advertisement featuring Gérard Butler is offensive. It belittles a man for requesting a lime slice with his beer. While this may seem funny to many, an equal or larger number of people enjoy citrus with their beer or cider - popularly linked with women having a lime or lemon slice with their cider. I understand the message that Windhoek beer is complete on its own, however, shaming or belittling people for their personal preferences is not ok.



Source: YouTube

“Rather try to attract all customers instead of being stupidly restrictive and offending a whole range of potential customers. At least no-one gets a celebrity to insult my Heineken or Savannah with lemon or lime slice....”

“Gender stereotyping or negative gender portrayal must not be permitted in advertising, unless in the opinion of the ARB, such stereotyping or portrayal is reasonable and justifiable in an open and democratic society based on human dignity, equality and freedom,” states the ARB.

Heineken was instructed to withdraw or amend the commercial.

See the [full ruling issued by the ARB](#).

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