LifeStyle Change

Rubber promos get real

December 1, 1998 By Gabi Horn

Condom ads are finally getting the picture. LifeStyles' new "Condoms Shaped for 2" print and TV campaign, featuring couples riding a motorcycle or romping in bed, is the nation's first to use (hetero)sexual images to sell safes. "Our ads talk about love and lust, not death and dying," said Carol Carozza of Ansell Personal Products, maker of LifeStyles. "People don't respond to threats. To bring new users into the market, we have to get them where they live." And where is that? Apparently, gals call *Glamour* magazine home, and dudes dwell at shock-jock Howard Stern's TV show. "If Howard Stern says wear a condom, they'll do it," Carozza said.

The American Family Association (AFA) slammed CBS for "selling out" the public by airing the ads. "Endorsing 'safe sex' is dangerous," said AFA's Bill Johnson. "For Stern's self-centered, careless audience, we should promote abstinence." A week after the promo played, Los Angeles-based KCBS' Tim Shawn counted 60 complaints about the show, but few ad-specific squawks. "Some people called them suggestive and vulgar," he said. "But, hey, they're *condom* commercials."

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