brand are less favorable than for the sponsor brand, and that purchase intentions and choice behavior are negatively affected as a result (Grewal, Kavanoor, Ferr, Costley and Barnes 1997).

Second, the language and format of combined comparatives may significantly alter consumers' interpretation of brand information. Several researchers who have reviewed deceptive advertising cases under the Lanham Act suggest that careful selection of language and format proved instrumental in crafting comparative claims that "stretched the truth" (Goldman 1993; Preston 1989b, 1994). The ambiguous wording of some parity claims, in particular, may encourage superiority inferences that cannot be substantiated (Harris and Monaco 1978; Preston 1989 a, b; Snyder 1989). The parity claims against Rembrandt in the Aquafresh ad previously discussed stated that "not even Rembrandt can whiten better than Aquafresh whitening," and "Even Rembrandt can't beat Aquafresh." Similarly, Aleve claimed "Aleve is longer-lasting than Extra-Strength Tylenol. Advil isn't stronger..." The inference strongly encouraged by the wording of these claims is that both Rembrandt an Advil are outperformed by the sponsor brands, even when the explicit claim only makes a parity comparison. In both cases the superiority inferences lacked substantiation. Furthermore, such inferences are likely to be facilitated by the placement of the superiority claims in relation to parity comparisons. In combined comparatives, superiority claims are often placed in close proximity to the

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5 Report of NARB Panel 97; Disposition of Advertising Referred to NARB regarding Smith Kline Beecham's Aquafresh Whitening Toothpaste.