

The Time Inc. v. Richard decision: the Fine Print Still the Subject of Much Debate

March 1, 2010

This publication was authored by Luc Thibaudeau, former partner of Lavery and now judge in the Civil Division of the Court of Québec, District of Longueuil.

Article 219 of the *Consumer Protection Act* states that no merchant may, by any means whatsoever, make a false or misleading representation to a consumer. Article 238 states that no merchant may falsely declare that they possess a status of identity. These provisions aim to ensure that consumers have access to all the information they need to make an enlightened decision with respect to purchases, and that the merchant has clearly represented the attributes of a good or service being offered.

But what constitutes false or misleading representation, exactly? To what point may merchants “deform” reality in their advertising messages to consumers?