



Case Report

1	Case Number	0078/15
2	Advertiser	Stan
3	Product	Entertainment
4	Type of Advertisement / media	TV - Free to air
5	Date of Determination	11/03/2015
6	DETERMINATION	Dismissed

ISSUES RAISED

- Other Social Values
- 2.4 - Sex/sexuality/nudity S/S/N - general
- 2.5 - Language Inappropriate language

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

Rebel Wilson holding a mobile phone in one hand and a miniature horse (dressed as a unicorn) on a lead in the other. Rebel is having a conversation with the director about the obscurity of the set up for the advertisement about to be shot and comments that the "goat is licking my crutch".

THE COMPLAINT

A sample of comments which the complainant/s made regarding this advertisement included the following:

Obscene content in this ad not appropriate for family viewing- Actress says at end of ad that the horse is licking her crutch.

This should be obvious. However we were sitting with our 7 year old granddaughter and family this was highly offensive.

The final comment at the end 'now it's licking my crotch' is unbelievably disgusting.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

Comments which the advertiser made in response to the complainant/s regarding this advertisement include the following:

We refer to your letter enclosing complaints made to the Bureau in relation to the advertisement identified in this response (“Advertisement”).

In our view, the Advertisement complies in all relevant respects with the AANA Code of Ethics (“Code”), and is in step with Prevailing Community Standards, including as detailed in the AANA’s Practice Note to the Code.

The Advertisement is part of a Stan marketing campaign featuring Rebel Wilson, an Australian actor enjoying considerable success in Australia and internationally, through her roles in Bridesmaids, Bachelorette and Pitch Perfect, among other feature films and television programs.

The Advertisement, and the campaign as a whole, adopts a playful and humorous tone, employing Rebel’s considerable comic talents to introduce the Stan brand to Australian audiences.

The Advertisement has been given a PG rating by CAD and is being scheduled in timeslots appropriate to its classification.

Without limiting our response to the specific issues raised in the complaints, we address in turn below each of the elements of Section 2 of the Code.

Section 2.1: Discrimination or vilification

The Advertisement does not discriminate against or vilify a person or section of the community on account of race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, age, sexual preference, religion, disability, mental illness or political belief.

Section 2.2: Exploitative and degrading

The Advertisement does not attempt to employ sexual appeal in any manner, let alone “in a manner which is exploitative and degrading of any individual or group of people”.

The complaints refer to Rebel’s line about the unicorn “licking my crotch.” “Crotch” is commonly used as both a clothing/tailoring reference and an anatomical description, and in our view carries no sexual connotations in the context of the Advertisement. To the extent that a simple reference to that region of the body can be said by definition to carry sexual connotations, the word “crotch” must be an example of the very mildest form of innuendo.

Section 2.3: Violence

The Advertisement does not present or portray violence.

Section 2.4: Sex, sexuality and nudity

For the reasons set out above (Section 2.2), the Advertisement could only be said to include

any sexual references to the extent that the general descriptor “crotch” carries, by necessity, any sexual connotation.

As noted above, in our view the word does not carry any such connotation in this context.

The creative intention of this moment in the Advertisement is to convey Rebel’s awkwardness in performing alongside the pony/”unicorn”, an aim which supports the overall campaign proposition that the Stan deal is straightforward and requires no tricks or gimmicks to sell itself.

Another, broader creative aim is to leverage Rebel’s uncensored, tell-it-like-it-is personality to reflect Stan’s brand values of honesty and simplicity.

Rebel’s unembarrassed, uninflected use of the word “crotch” aims, on a literal level, to present a light-hearted, off-the-cuff moment consistent with the style and tone of the campaign and, on a thematic level, to capture the idea that Stan as a brand is direct proposition with nothing to hide. Neither aim involves nor requires any sexual undertones.

Section 2.5: Language

As noted above, the Advertisement has been classified by CAD and is being scheduled in timeslots appropriate to its classification.

For the reasons set out above, the language, relevantly the word “crotch,” is appropriate in the circumstances of the style and tone of the Advertisement and its creative and marketing aims. The word is in everyday use both in an anatomical sense and as a tailoring or clothing reference, e.g. “the crotch of the pants.” It could in no way be considered “strong or obscene.”

The Board’s determination summary on “Language in Advertising” notes that “words which are innocuous and in widespread and common use in the Australian vernacular” are generally acceptable, particularly where used with gentle humour and not in an aggressive or demeaning manner.

The word “crotch” is in widespread community use with the meanings described above and without any necessary sexual overtones. The word is used in the Advertisement in a humorous, non-demeaning manner for creative and marketing effect.

Section 2.6: Health and safety

Given the above, the Advertisement cannot in any way be said to depict material contrary to Prevailing Community Standards on health and safety, including as detailed in the Board’s determination summary on “Health and Safety in Advertising.”

The animal is not dangerous or depicted as dangerous; the choreography of the scene and the interaction between the animal and the performers are gentle, safe and healthy.

Conclusion

For the reasons set out above, in our view the Advertisement complies in all relevant respects

with the Code.

THE DETERMINATION

The Advertising Standards Board (“Board”) considered whether this advertisement breaches Section 2 of the Advertiser Code of Ethics (the “Code”).

The Board noted the complainants’ concern that the advertisement features an inappropriate sexual reference regarding a goat licking a woman’s crutch.

The Board viewed the advertisement and noted the advertiser’s response.

The Board considered whether the advertisement was in breach of Section 2.4 of the Code. Section 2.4 of the Code states: “Advertising or Marketing Communications shall treat sex, sexuality and nudity with sensitivity to the relevant audience”.

The Board noted that this television advertisement features Rebel Wilson complaining about working with a pony dressed as a unicorn and then commenting that it is licking her crutch.

The Board noted that the advertisement had been rated ‘PG’ by CAD.

The Board noted that when Rebel makes the comment about the pony licking her crutch the screen is covered in text and we do not actually see what she is describing. The Board noted the advertiser’s response that ‘crutch’ is a tailoring reference but considered that most members of the community would interpret ‘crutch’ as referring to a woman’s pubic area. Notwithstanding this reference to a woman’s pubic area the Board noted that Rebel is seen wearing a long dress and considered that the comment the pony is licking Rebel’s crutch is suggestive of the animal behaving in an inappropriate manner which is naughty rather than sexual. The Board noted that we do not see the scenario described and considered that overall the suggestion is not sexual and does treat the issue of sex, sexuality and nudity with sensitivity to the relevant audience.

The Board determined that the advertisement did not breach Section 2.4 of the Code.

The Board then considered whether the advertisement was in breach of Section 2.5 of the Code. Section 2.5 of the Code states: “Advertising or Marketing Communications shall only use language which is appropriate in the circumstances (including appropriate for the relevant audience and medium). Strong or obscene language shall be avoided”.

The Board noted the complainants’ concerns over the use of the word ‘crutch’. The Board considered that ‘crutch’ when used in a factual/descriptive manner is not a word which most members of the community would find strong or obscene. The Board considered that the use

of the word 'crutch' in the advertisement is not inappropriate in the circumstances.

The Board determined that the advertisement did not breach Section 2.5 of the Code.

Finding that the advertisement did not breach the Code on other grounds, the Board dismissed the complaints.