



# Case Report

1	Case Number	0208/15
2	Advertiser	Stan
3	Product	Entertainment
4	Type of Advertisement / media	TV - Free to air
5	Date of Determination	27/05/2015
6	DETERMINATION	Dismissed

## ISSUES RAISED

- 2.1 - Discrimination or Vilification Gender
- 2.4 - Sex/sexuality/nudity S/S/N - general
- 2.5 - Language Inappropriate language

## DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

This advertisement features a mock "behind the scenes" look at the production of a Stan "TV ad," in which the "Director" and the Rebel character discuss the best way to market the availability of World Movies on Stan. Rebel suggests she simply say "me and my big pussy love it," and camera subsequently reveals a large pet cat in her lap. The Director asks if that is her pussy he can smell and then says, "It's nice. A little picante but it's fragrant".

## THE COMPLAINT

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

*Rebel Wilson uses vulgar references to her genital to which the interviewer asks if she smells and he says he likes it. I find this a vulgar and offensive play on words which refers to the female genital.*

*The advertisement relied on crass and vulgar double entendre.*

*The use of crude innuendo suggesting Rebel Wilson had a "big pussy" ( large cat is sitting on her lap) and that it smelt. Highly tasteless and something that only a 15 year old boy would find funny, in my opinion.*

*Offensive because of the tacky reference to pussy and its smell. Don't understand how this is appropriate for advertising.*

*Degrading to women.*

*Rebel Wilson is funny, but reference to her 'pussy' is unnecessary and in poor taste in my opinion.*

*Wording is 'can't I just say that my pussy and I love Stan' or similar and the male voice over says 'oh is that your Pusey I can smell'. Unless I heard this wrong I think this is a disgrace and totally unacceptable and disrespectful to women and is totally inappropriate at such a family viewing time and I do not want to be subject to such poor taste without warning.*

*Reference to female genitalia and the smelling of same. Inappropriate innuendo.*

*I am absolutely disgusted and offended by the reference to her pussy and even more appalled by the comment as the ad fades out about the fact that the guy can smell her pussy and comments on what it smells like. I cannot believe that this is appropriate advertising for any product. The fact that the broadcasting authority actually allowed it on to television disgusts me.*

## **THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE**

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

*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 an M 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 a manner which is exploitative and degrading of any individual or group of people.*

*The advertisement uses sexual innuendo for humorous effect to draw attention to features of the advertiser's service, namely the selection of mature audience and world movies available on Stan.*

*The double entendre used in the Advertisement is a play on the word "pussy," used here as a literal reference to the Rebel character's pet cat and, in the context, carrying a simultaneous suggestive reference to the female genitalia.*

*The word "pussy" is in common use in the Australian vernacular, and the level of innuendo here is appropriate to its rating and scheduled timeslot. Particularly given the humorous context and the playful tone of the delivery by the performers, the Advertisement cannot be said to degrade or abuse any person or group of persons.*

### *Section 2.3: Violence*

*The Advertisement does not present or portray violence.*

### *Section 2.4: Sex, sexuality and nudity*

*There is no sex or nudity in the Advertisement. Rather, the Advertisement employs sexual innuendo in a humorous way for the aims of the campaign of which it forms part.*

*The creative intention of the Advertisement is to draw attention to Stan's mature audience programming in a humorous manner consistent with the broader Stan launch campaign. In the circumstances, the innuendo is appropriate and proportionate to the creative aims of the spot.*

*In the context of its CAD rating and scheduling, the Advertisement treats sex and sexuality with sensitivity to the relevant audience.*

### *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 references to the word "pussy," is appropriate in the circumstances of the style and tone of the Advertisement and its creative and marketing aims. The word is in common use and the tone of the Advertisement is satirical.*

*The Board's determination summary on "Language in Advertising" notes that the Board considers advertisements which "feature mild coarse language in a context that is not aggressive, threatening, sexual or demeaning" to be acceptable.*

*The innuendo in the Advertisement is employed in a humorous, non-threatening manner for creative and marketing effect.*

*In terms of precedent, in its determination on case number 0314/13, the Board considered the use of the words "wet pussy" not to be inappropriate in the context of the marketing of an alcoholic beverage. As the Advertisement in the present case is directed towards adults and relates to the promotion of mature age programs on the Stan service, we submit that a similar*

*view should be taken here.*

### *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."*

### *Conclusion*

*For the reasons set out above, in our view the Advertisement complies in all relevant respects with the Code, and the complaints should be set aside.*

## **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' concerns that the advertisement is degrading to women in its reference to a pussy and its smell and that it is not appropriate for airing on television.

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

The Board noted that some of the complainants were concerned that the advertisement is in bad taste. The Board noted that the issue of taste falls outside the Code and cannot therefore be considered by the Board as part of their determination.

The Board considered whether the advertisement complied with Section 2.1 of the Code which requires that 'advertisements shall not portray or depict material in a way which discriminates against or vilifies a person or section of the community on account of race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, age, sexual preference, religion, disability, mental illness or political belief.'

The Board noted this television advertisement features Rebel Wilson talking about her big pussy and a man commenting on its smell.

The Board noted the complainants' concerns that the advertisement is degrading to women in its suggestion that a woman's vagina would smell.

The Board noted that when Rebel talks about her 'big pussy' we cannot see the cat on her lap but as soon as she makes this comment the camera moves to reveal the large cat sitting on her

lap.

The Board noted that the comments made by the man about the smell of the pussy are not demeaning and considered that while a reference to a woman's genitals is unusual, in this context it is not vilifying of women. The Board considered that whilst the advertisement is clearly employing a suggestive double entendre in the Board's view the references to the smell of the pussy are backed up by the visibility of a cat.

The Board considered that the advertisement did not portray or depict material in a way which discriminates against or vilifies a person or section of the community on account of their gender.

The Board determined that the advertisement did not breach Section 2.1 of the Code.

The Board then 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 'pussy' is a slang term for a woman's vagina and that some members of the community could find it inappropriate. The Board noted that the advertisement had been rated 'M' by CAD and considered that in the context of the target adult audience of 'M' rated material the use of the slang term 'pussy' is sexualised but, shown with a cat, is sufficiently sensitive to a mature audience.

The Board noted that Rebel is fully covered throughout the advertisement and considered that the kissing scene playing on a television screen behind her is not overly sexualised or inappropriate.

Overall the Board considered that the advertisement did treat the issue of sex, sexuality and nudity with sensitivity to the relevant audience and 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 that 'pussy' can be used as a slang term for a vagina.

The Board that it had recently upheld an advertisement featuring the word pussy in case 0549/14 where:

“The Board noted that the advertisement includes a picture of Dennis Hopper and an apparent quote from him ‘I ate so much pussy in those days my beard looked like a glazed donut.’

The Board noted that the use of the word ‘pussy’ in relation to a sexual act is a blatant sexual reference not suitable for a broad audience. The Board considered that this amounts to language which is inappropriate in the circumstances.”

The Board noted in the current advertisement the use of the word ‘pussy’ is given context by the depiction of an actual cat and considered that whilst the advertisement is clearly playing on a double entendre the use of the cat lessens the impact of the word.

The Board considered that while some people in the community would find the reference unnecessary or offensive in the Board’s view most members of the community would not find the word ‘pussy’ when used in conjunction with a cat to be language which is strong, obscene or 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.