



CASE REPORT

1. Complaint reference number	305/03
2. Advertiser	Cottons Pty Ltd
3. Product	Toiletries
4. Type of advertisement	Cinema
5. Nature of complaint	Portrayal of sex/sexuality/nudity – section 2.3
6. Date of determination	Tuesday, 14 October 2003
7. DETERMINATION	Dismissed

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

The advertisement reviewed by the Board opens with a visual scene of a camera scanning across a white surface and filming four sanitary pads. The last pad is a cotton pad and has a white furry cat sitting on top of it. The voiceover states, “We took the leading synthetic pads and compared them for comfort against one made with natural cottons. The most comfortable pad for your ...”. Then the cat sitting on top of the cotton pad makes a “Miaow” sound. The camera then cuts to a shot of a pack of Cotton’s pads and the tag line “Be Natural”.

THE COMPLAINT

Comments which the complainant/s made regarding this advertisement included the following:

“I believe this ad is in poor taste and offensive to the general public. The audience was of the teenage and younger age bracket which also included male youths and therefore proved embarrassing for all the audience especially the females. ... These forms of ads are demeaning to women and there needs to be more thought put into how women feel about such insensitive advertising ...”

THE ADVERTISER’S RESPONSE

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

“We know the ad strongly communicated the “comfort” message in a humorous and engaging way because we researched the idea with many women before making it, and our research feedback encouraged us to proceed. ... We have also decided to instruct our media agency to ensure that in future the pussy cinema ad only appears in M rated films (as opposed to PG rated films) which was the case that lead to the complaint that you have received.”

THE DETERMINATION

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

The Board considered that the intended humour of the advertisement would be recognised by the majority of people exposed to it and in fact found the advertisement to be a very mild one for the subject matter. The Board further determined that, within the context of prevailing community standards, the advertisement did not contravene the provisions of the Code.

Finding that the material did not breach any area of the Code, the Board dismissed the complaint.