



Case Report

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| 1 | Case Number | 0198/11 |
| 2 | Advertiser | Steer Bar & Grill |
| 3 | Product | Restaurants |
| 4 | Type of Advertisement / media | Print |
| 5 | Date of Determination | 22/06/2011 |
| 6 | DETERMINATION | Upheld - Modified or Discontinued |

ISSUES RAISED

- 2.3 - Sex/sexuality/nudity Treat with sensitivity to relevant audience
- 2.1 - Discrimination or Vilification Sex

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

Half page print advertisement which shows a pair of female legs with short skirt and high heels, and a meat tray. The accompanying text reads: 'Fancy a tasty bit of skirt'.

THE COMPLAINT

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

The advert has been placed by the Steer Bar & Grill 637 Chapel St South Yarra Vic ph 03 90401188 in the Melbourne Weekly May 2011 and is overtly sexual in its content and insulting to females and especially harmful to young women and teenagers.

The advertisement plays on the term "skirt" to use sex to advertise meat.

The advertisement is sexist and misogynist in that the image of the woman next to the photograph of raw meat draws the terrible analogy of a woman BEING meat for consumption.

This advertisement seems designed to appeal to a particular sort of man - one who believes that women are nothing more than meat. In this way it is offensive to the entire community - men and women alike.

Ideally a retraction and a public apology in the same publication would be appropriate.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

In response to the complaint of the half page advertisement for Steer Bar & Grill (reference 0198/11), we in no way constructed it to be disrespectful or offensive to women. On the contrary, we have the utmost respect for women, having daughters, female partners and female employees.

The ad in question was intended to be a humorous play on words and was used in an entirely innocent manner. The management of Steer in no way considers women to resemble meat nor believe they should be seen or treated that way. Whilst the ad was intended to be cheeky and humorous, to draw a conclusion that women = meat just because there is meat on the postcard we believe is looking far too deeply for ill intention which was never designed into the ad.

The meat tray that appears on the back of the postcard is not a reference to women but rather shows the various cuts of meat available at Steer (including skirt steak). This display of meat is used within the actual restaurant and is also used in all of our marketing campaigns. It is not unique to this particular advertisement.

We always circulate a proposed advertisement amongst friends and staff prior to printing or publishing to gauge potential response (good, bad or otherwise). This particular ad did not elicit a negative response from anyone that previewed it, many women included. Everyone saw the humour in it. We therefore went ahead with the ad with confidence it would be received well. There was no indication from anyone that this was potentially offensive.

THE DETERMINATION

The Advertising Standards Board ("Board") considered whether this advertisement breaches Section 2 of the Advertiser Code of Ethics (the "Code") and the AANA Food and Beverages Advertising and Marketing Communication Code (the "F&B" Code).

The Board noted the complainants' concerns that the advertisement was comparing a woman's body to a piece of meat and is overtly sexual.

The Board considered the application of Section 2.1 of the Code, relating to discrimination and vilification on the basis of sex and Section 2.3, relating to sex, sexuality and nudity.

The Board considered whether the advertisement was in breach of Section 2.1 of the Code. Section 2.1 of the Code states: "Advertising or Marketing Communications shall not portray people or depict material in a way which discriminates against or vilifies a person or Section of the community on account of race, ethnicity, nationality, sex, age, sexual preference, religion, disability or political belief."

The Board noted the advertiser's response that "the advertisement is intended to be a humorous play on words.'

The Board noted that the advertisement includes the headline: "Fancy a tasty bit of skirt' and noted that it had considered a similar advertisement 59/09 Australian Gourmet Meat in which it had upheld complaints on the basis that the advertisement:

"...did imply a comparison between the women's bottoms and the different grades of meat. The Board considered that such a comparison was offensive and demeaning to larger women. The Board also considered that any comparison of women to meat was vilifying and discriminatory. The Board considered this comparison was vilifying of women generally and that the advertisement was in contravention of Section 2.1 of the Code."

The Board considered that the present advertisement, which depicted the lower half of a woman wearing a short skirt, with the text 'fancy a tasty bit of skirt' and then images of various cuts of meat, made a strong suggestion comparing a woman to a cut of meat.

The Board considered that this advertisement does objectify women and that it would be likely that people would make a comparison between a woman and pieces of meat. In the Board's view this image amounts to discrimination or vilification of women. The Board noted the advertiser's intention for the advertisement to be a humorous play on words but in the Board's view reasonable people viewing the advertisement would readily infer a comparison between the woman and cuts of meat.

The Board determined that the advertisement breached Section 2.1 of the Code.

The Board then considered whether the advertisement was in breach of Section 2.3 of the Code. Section 2.3 of the Code states: "Advertising or Marketing Communications shall treat sex, sexuality and nudity with sensitivity to the relevant audience and, where appropriate, the relevant programme time zone".

The Board considered that the image of the woman was very mildly sexually suggestive as a result of the wording 'fancy a tasty bit of skirt'. The Board considered that the mild sexual suggestion was not inappropriate to the relevant audience which is primarily adults. The Board determined that the advertisement did not breach Section 2.3 of the Code.

Determining that the advertisement breached Section 2.1 of the Code the Board upheld the complaints.

ADVERTISER RESPONSE TO DETERMINATION

I wish to confirm that as a result of the findings of the Advertising Standards Bureau regarding the above matter, Steer Bar and Grill has now discontinued its use of the offending advertisement.

