



Ad Standards Community Panel
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AdStandards.com.au

Advertising Standards Bureau Limited
ACN 084 452 666

Case Report

1	Case Number	0316/18
2	Advertiser	Roadshow Films
3	Product	Entertainment
4	Type of Advertisement / media	Outdoor
5	Date of Determination	25/07/2018
6	DETERMINATION	Dismissed

ISSUES RAISED

- 2.3 - Violence Causes alarm and distress
- 2.3 - Violence Causes alarm and distress to Children
- 2.3 - Violence Violence

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

This poster advertisement is a bus shelter advert for Sicario: Day of the Soldado. It features a stylised skull, with two male characters above the skull holding large guns.

THE COMPLAINT

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

It's inappropriate to put the ad of MA rated near Primary Schools, exposing young children to violence. Please consider the appropriate demographics for certain type of advertising.

Very scary image for small children (and even grown ups!!) Death and crime are not subjects that I think are good things to start and end the school day with when I do school runs. Kids ask a lot of questions about the adverts at the bus stop because they see them every day and they are at eye level for them.



THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

The creative does not contain anything that is discriminatory, exploitative or degrading in nature. It also does not feature strong or obscene language, nudity, scary or supernatural themes or material contrary to health and safety standards. The creative does depict violence, however this is relevant to the Film being advertised and accordingly unavoidable.

It should also be noted that the creative was sent to Adshel for approval prior to printing and in accordance to their policy our creative has not been placed within 300m of schools.

THE DETERMINATION

The Ad Standards Community Panel (the Panel) considered whether this advertisement breaches Section 2 of the Advertiser Code of Ethics (the Code).

The Panel noted the complainants' concern that the advertisement is violent.

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

The Panel noted that this outdoor advertisement is a bus shelter advert for Sicario: Day of the Soldado. It features a stylised skull, with two male characters above the skull holding guns.

The Panel considered whether the advertisement breached Section 2.3 of the Code. Section 2.3 states: "Advertising or Marketing Communications shall not present or portray violence unless it is justifiable in the context of the product or service advertised".

The Panel noted the complainants' concern that the advertisement is overly graphic, violent and scary.

The Panel noted the advertiser's response that the imagery in the advertisement is directly related to the movie being promoted.

The Panel considered that the style of the skull in the advertisement was similar to sugar skull art commonly associated with the Day of the Dead holiday in Mexico. The Panel considered that while the central feature of this advertisement is the skull, it is



highly stylised and not a realistic representation of a human skull.

The Panel considered that the other imagery in the advertisement, grim reapers, hands praying, a girl in a black dress, silhouettes of people and two men holding guns are also consistent with this theme, and relevant to the movie being advertised.

The Panel considered that the images of the two men holding guns are pointing the guns off the side of the poster, and not towards the viewer or at anyone else depicted.

The Panel considered that while there were some elements of the advertisement which might be scary, the overall impression of the advertisement was not one of menace, and the advertisement did not contain any blood, gore or overt violence.

In the Panel's view the images contained in the advertisement were justifiable in the context of a poster promoting an MA15+ movie which contains violence and did not breach Section 2.3 of the Code.

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

