



Ad Standards Community Panel  
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Advertising Standards Bureau Limited  
ACN 084 452 666

# Case Report

1	Case Number	0524/18
2	Advertiser	Grill'd
3	Product	Food / Beverages
4	Type of Advertisement / media	Poster
5	Date of Determination	12/12/2018
6	DETERMINATION	Dismissed

## ISSUES RAISED

- 2.2 - Objectification Degrading - women
- 2.5 - Language Inappropriate language

## DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

This poster advertisement features an image of a burder and the text "Don't be a motherfaker. Eat like a motherlover. Burgers from a better place"

## THE COMPLAINT

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

*The intent of using Motherfucker with a thin veil of motherfaker spelling is front and center of the ad.*

*Maybe an argument for it could be made if it was mothersday campaign or something The advertiser is essentially using vulgar language to get attention in a public space poster ad and hiding it with a typo.*

*Grilld is big enough and accessible to all ages so should try stay family friendly in public areas.*

*This ad is offensive to women. It objectifies women. It is too obviously close to Motherfucker, sharing so many letters and pronunciation. It is vulgar.*



*This ad is offensive to women in the extreme. It is objectifying women and at the same time glorifying addictive food. It appears their whole campaign is based on this. Their website refers to a Motherlover. The only expression I know that relates to their languaging is Motherfucker. No imagination needed to make the association!*

#### **THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE**

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

*The Grill'd Burgers from a better place campaign is all highlighting our simple belief in providing burgers that are better for you, better for the community and better for mother earth - as we say, we're Motherlovers.*

*Burgers from a better place means our products are made to the highest standards, such as the use of RSPCA Approved chicken and pork. And we are constantly improving our nature and business practices. The alternative? Using additives and not being aware of our impact on the planet.*

*Calling ourselves Motherlovers is simply our way of showing our commitment to providing burgers that are better for you, better for the community and better for mother earth.*

*Burgers from a better place means taking the time to know where our products come from, as opposed to using additives and not being aware of our impact on the planet.*

*After 14 years, Grill'd has a history of advertising that taps into what our customers and Australians can see and see through.*

*The OOH advertisements the customers have raised concerns about are no longer in view, the OOH advertisements finished on Sunday 02/12/2018.*

*If you have any further comments or questions don't hesitate to contact Grill'd further.*

#### **THE DETERMINATION**

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

The Panel noted the complainants' concerns that the language is offensive, is clearly an obscenity and is objectifying of women.

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



The Panel considered whether the advertisement was in breach of Section 2.2 of the Code. Section 2.2 of the Code states: “Advertising or marketing communications should not employ sexual appeal in a manner which is exploitative or degrading of any individual or group of people.”

The Panel noted that this Poster advertisement depicts a burger and the text “Don’t be a motherfaker, eat like a mother lover”, and “Burgers from a better place”.

The Panel considered that the slogan references “motherfakers” and “motherlovers”. The Panel noted that some complainants’ concerns that this reference is very similar to the obscenity “motherfucker” and that that reference was objectifying of women.

The Panel noted that in order to be considered under Section 2.2 of the Code an advertisement must be determined to employ sexual appeal. The Panel considered that most members of the community would not consider the word “motherfaker” to constitute sexual appeal.

The Panel determined that the advertisement did not employ sexual appeal and did not breach Section 2.2 of the Code.

The Panel 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 Panel noted the complainants’ concerns that the language is offensive and is clearly an obscenity.

The Panel considered that this Poster advertisement was displayed at public transport stops and the audience would be broad and likely include children.

The Panel considered the word “motherfaker” is not a well-known word in the context of the advertisement is likely to be read as a reference to not be a bad parent. The Panel considered that it is not a clear reference to “motherfucker” and does not amount to strong or obscene language.

The Panel noted that no actual strong language is used in the advertisement. The Panel considered that the advertisement does make a viewer look twice to confirm the language, but it is clear that no strong language is used.

The Panel considered that the language used in the advertisement is not inappropriate for a broad audience and did not contain strong or obscene language and 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 Panel dismissed the complaints.

