

PETA CONTINUES TO COURT CONTROVERSY – NEW AD BRANDED INSENSITIVE AND PROVOCATIVE



Animal rights activists Peta, has come under fire again, this time from the National Obesity Forum (NOF) for its latest provocative advertising campaign, which blames obesity on eating animal products. Stirred by the opening of a new super-size mortuary in Gloucester, that catered to obese people and designed to carry obese corpses weighing up to 50 stones, Peta placed a billboard in the same town as the mortuary, showing a pastry-topped coffin case with the tagline "Not Ready To Meat Your Maker? Fight Obesity, Go Vegan" in gothic script, a font commonly used for headstones. What added to the provocation was that the confrontational billboard was placed in close proximity to the new mortuary designed specifically for the obese in Gloucester. A spokeswoman for Peta admitted that the location was specifically chosen because of the new mortuary. The ad has been condemned by obesity campaigners, who have called it insensitive and irresponsible and a "laughable" endeavor to highlight other people's misfortunes. Peta said that their ad was an attempt to point the dangers of eating animal products and that research had conclusively proved that consuming animal products lead to obesity and the only way to keep weight off permanently was to adopt a vegan diet. Yvonne Taylor, a spokeswoman for the campaign said, "Peta's new billboard highlights how meat pies and pasties have been linked to obesity and other ailments. The best thing that coffin dodgers can do for their health and to help animals is to go vegan". The people have not taken kindly to being referred to as "coffin dodger" and have since vandalized the ad, ripping off the portion where the slogan was printed. Tam Fry from the National Obesity Forum called the advertisement insensitive and said, "we want to do all we can to lessen obesity, but I do not think it appropriate at all to draw attention to it in this manner." "Had the billboard been Peta's April Fool last week it might have been mildly funny but if they hoped for the message to be taken seriously, it is they who are laughable. The premise behind the wording is completely wrong, it's irresponsible, it should be taken down immediately," she said. Peta refuted charges of irresponsibility and said, "what's irresponsible is to have our loved ones' lives cut short because we pretend not to hear or see the overwhelming scientific evidence that vegetarians and vegans are far less likely to be overweight than meat-eaters are." "While the meat and dairy industries bombard us with advertisements that have our kids screaming for hamburgers and chicken nuggets now, they'll be screaming in earnest later when they're too fat to tie their own shoelaces and their clogged arteries see them laid out in an oversized coffin." Ironically, the vandalized billboard, from where the slogan was ripped off, now reveals a portion of the earlier ad, over which it was pasted, and the picture now visible is of McCain oven chips, a high-calorific meal that conveys the opposite of Peta's message.