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Pub's 'appalling' advert slammed for asking "would you punch your ex in the face?" in exchange for a snack

Owner Craig Harker said the promotion was a "joke" when it was posted on the pub's Facebook page but it was soon condemned by domestic violence campaigners



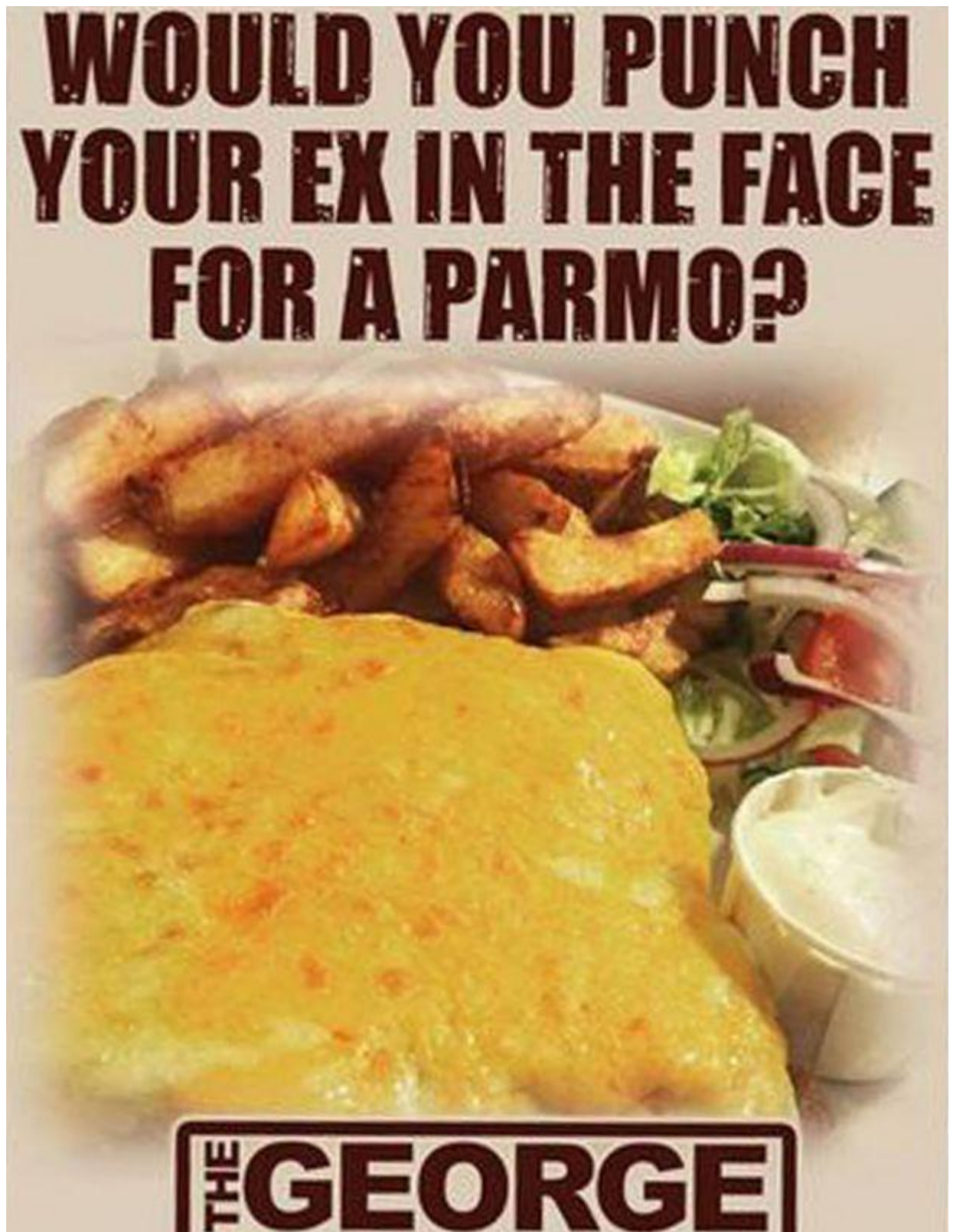
Craig Harker, pictured here with a parmo, said the Facebook advert was a joke (Image: Evening Gazette)

A pub has been rapped over an advert which asked people 'would you punch your ex in the face' for a fast food snack.

Domestic violence campaigners slammed The George Pub & Grill in Stockton over a Facebook promotion of its parmo.

And the Advertising Standards Authority upheld a complaint, stating the ad "trivialised and encouraged domestic violence", [Gazette Live](#) reports.

Pub owner Craig Harker said the message, which asked 'Would you punch your ex in the face for a parmo?', was a "joke" when it was posted onto the pub's Facebook page in May.



The advert was branded 'appalling' by domestic violence campaigners

The popular Teesside delicacy is deep fried chicken with Parmesan cheese as a topping.

He said the advert attracted hundreds of likes and positive comments about the pub, which is known for its belly-busting eating challenges.

But it was quickly condemned by campaigners.

Lesley Gibson, chief executive of Teesside domestic abuse service Harbour, said: "It's actually appalling.

"I don't think it's appropriate for domestic violence to be used in this way.



The pub previously sparked outrage after offering free food to anybody weighing over 25 stone (Image: Evening Gazette)

“But I am encouraged that attitudes about domestic violence are changing enough to mean that someone made a complaint about it.”

In a ruling [published yesterday](#), the ASA upheld the complaint and said: “We considered that referring to domestic violence in an advert for a fast food dish trivialised and condoned domestic violence and concluded that the ad was not prepared in a socially responsible manner.”

Responding to the ruling, Mr Harker said: “I’ve not had anything from the ASA. I didn’t even know they existed.

“The post was something that we took from Facebook. It was on all the banter pages, and said stuff like ‘would you punch your ex for a \$1m’, stuff like that, so we changed it to parmo to localise it.



Craig Harker, from the George Pub in Stockton (Image: NCJ Media)

“Our promotions and marketing stay current with activities on social media and we have an in house design team to create material quickly. Marketing is out of date the very next day and we have to stay ahead of the game.”

The George hit the headlines last month after [obesity campaigners slammed the pub for offering free food to anybody weighing over 25 stone](#) - as long as they publicly weigh themselves.

The venue is famous for its 'Man vs Food'-style challenges, which include an 8,000 calorie kebab parmo.

At the time, Craig said the initiative was a "bit of fun" - and has remained committed to its high calorie menu.



The pub has previously been slammed by obesity campaigners for offering free meals to anyone over 25 stone (Image: SWNS.com)

Some customers expressed an interest in taking up the offer but others have slammed it as an 'awful' stunt.

Jane DeVille-Almond, chairman of the British Obesity Society, said: "It is a sign of our times when people do not take health seriously.

"The owner of the pub clearly has no idea of the difficulties morbidly obese people face, and it is sad he is using their problems to get publicity for the pub.

"I really do hope no one takes him up on the challenge."



Diners can feast on a 220 ounce steak meal at the pub (Image: SWNS.com)

But Mr Harker, who also offers a 220 oz steak along with a challenge to scoff 100 chicken nuggets in 10 minutes, defended the move.

He said at the time: "This is for grown ups, adults, who will get a free meal, so we are not making money from it. Yes there is publicity but we are a busy pub any way.

"We've had a lot of negative comments, but there are positive ones as well.

"If you followed the arguments against it then you would close every fast food outlet in the country."

DailyMirror