

# Regulating food advertising and freedom of speech

[Business](#), [Marketing](#)



Essay 2, Summary and Response Regulating Food Advertising and Freedom of Speech Perspectives on Advertising and Children Summary— As the author of article “ Regulating Food Advertising to Children,” Margo G. Wootan proposes, “ Responsible food marketing to children must address not only how food is marketed but also which foods are marketed to kids (334). ” She believes that even in the absence of government control there should be some guideline for food marketing to act responsibly and not encourage children to eat foods that are harmful to their health and well-being.

Because of the increasing rate of childhood obesity in the United States, the author suggests a compromise approach between marketing techniques and nutritional criteria to be met for children up to the age of eighteen (333). Food marketing is extremely influential in children’s food choices since it attracts their attention with the appeal of contests, prizes, cartoon characters, and their celebrity icons.

Although parents are a huge accountability for the food their children eat, Wootan believes it’s rather difficult for parents to compete with what marketing advertises as healthy as opposed to what parents consider is healthy for their children (333). The author suggests marketing being consistent with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans with the reduction of calories, sodium, refined sugars, and saturated and trans fats in order to support not overeating with reasonable portion sizes directly and indirectly.

Also, to stop and prevent unhealthy eating habits, food marketing should redesign products to improve their nutritional quality, including adding more fruits, vegetables, and whole grains presented in homes as well as school environments (335). As Wootan states, “ The marketing of products that may <https://assignbuster.com/regulating-food-advertising-and-freedom-of-speech/>

not be nutritionally ideal but provide some positive nutritional benefit and that could help children meet the Dietary Guidelines for Americans” is the ultimate compromise that benefits both food marketing and the health of today’s children (334).

In “ Advertising and Freedom of Speech: Beware of the Food Nanny,” author Robert Liodice justifies the importance of free speech by saying, “ Trampling on the First Amendment, whether through government controls or unsupported self-regulatory edicts, should not even be on anyone’s radar screen as a way to solve problems. ” Liodice believes CSPI overlooks a wide variety of factors beyond marketing that influence childhood food consumption (336). He thinks the guidelines on nutrition and marketing are so restrictive that it’s supported by flawed data and omit the significant, positive improvements food and marketing industries are taking.

For example, the marketing industry established the Children’s Advertising Review Unit (CARU), which screens material that may be misleading and receives comments and concerns from the public for the past thirty years (336). The author states CSPI mentioned a claim that marketing targeted at kids has doubled in the last ten years, but neglects to explain food ads seen by children under the age of twelve declined by 13% in the last four years.

Liodice insinuates CSPI’s narrow focus solely on food marketing misguides the public when other factors come into play because “ there is no simple or quick answer to this multifaceted challenge,” as the Surgeon General concluded (337). Response— Based on both arguments on food marketing aimed towards children and freedom of speech, I understand where each author is coming from and I agree with both to some extent. Wootan’s article <https://assignbuster.com/regulating-food-advertising-and-freedom-of-speech/>

makes a valid point that there are many factors that affect food choices, but food choices are mainly influenced by persuasive and attractive food marketing.

Companies have extensive expertise and efficient skills to lure children into wanting a line of products that may not be as nutritional but is portrayed as desirable. I also agree that some of Wootan's claims are invalid due to the lack of details and evidence compared to Liodice's more specified examples and statistics on food marketing and their effectiveness. Because food marketing is Wootan's only topic of debate, she disregards the other many factors that affect food choices by not elaborating upon them.

For example, American consumers have full knowledge of the importance of personal and parental responsibility, public education, dietary balance and moderation, and of course, physical activity; yet Wootan only focuses on the negatives of food marketing when all these factors are just as imperative in addressing the issues of childhood nutrition and obesity. In my opinion, Robert Liodice is correct in advocating free speech to be the basis of choice and personal responsibility.

Everyone has a right to their own opinion, however, I don't see the problem with the help of government control for some guidance with the public in order to educate them of a healthier lifestyle. With a set of guidelines, it will help set a standard for people to follow. Marketing and advertising cannot persuade everyone to eat healthier because they can only do so much to expose people of the advantages and benefits of a nutritional diet—that is if people even pay attention to food advertisement.

Healthy eating habits will all boil down to the individual deciding whether or not to put nutritional food in their mouth. Works Cited Wootan, Margo G. "Regulating Food Advertising to Children." Think: Critical Thinking and Logic Skills for Everyday Life. 2nd ed. Ed. Judith A. Boss. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2012. 333-335. Print. Liodice, Robert. "Advertising and Freedom of Speech: Beware of the Food Nanny." Think: Critical Thinking and Logic Skills for Everyday Life. 2nd ed. Ed. Judith A. Boss. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2012. 335-337. Print.