
Critical Essay

Student's Name

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The article *Don't Blame the Eater* by David Zinczenko published in the New York Times in 2002 remains relevant even more than a decade later. It addresses the topic of junk food, its influence on the health of people of different age groups including kids, and its long-term effects. Besides, the article contains reflections on personal responsibility and the guilt of the industry. It was written on order to attract the notice of the readers to the problem of obesity, unhealthy diet and lack of attention of parents and society in general to the food the younger generation prefers.

David Zinczenko uses a lot of examples, emotional appeals and analogies. He draws a parallel between the tobacco industry and junk food networks to show the range of possible negative effects. Burger King, McDonald's and other similar enterprises use a lot of advertising and try to sell as much fast food as possible. They do not care about what can happen to the children, teenagers or adults who get addicted to eating out there. The author draws a line between the amount of money spent on advertising and the one spent on health care. He states that they are interrelated and proves that with evidence.

The fact of the kids suing McDonald's for making them overweight astonishes. The author manages to look at it from different perspectives. On the one hand, he supports the idea that fast food restaurants do their business and earn money marketing to kids the products which are definitely not good for them. Such networks even

do not use any warning labels which could probably stop at least some of the consumers and make them think about possible hazards. On the other hand, the author focuses his attention on the idea of personal responsibility, independent thinking and freedom of choice.

The humor and irony of the article emphasize the seriousness of the problem. They make the article interesting to read but at the same time do not make it less informative or thought-provoking. The author gives examples from his own experience which make the article more personal. Millions of kids around the world also have to get affordable meals somewhere without the help of their parents who are mostly busy at work. He tells about the events that helped him change his unhealthy diet habits and those details can have an impact on the readers. A person who realized the hazards of junk food and managed to turn his life around can be an example to follow for young people. He can also make the parents who read the article think about the future of their kids.

Statistical data in the article is used to prove the point of view of the author and make the readers think about the great scale of the problems in question. The numbers demonstrate considerable rise of the cases of diabetes caused by obesity among children. The readers also see unbelievable amounts of money spent on health care every year. So, the author does everything possible to draw the attention to the interrelation of those two aspects. However, one of the most important things is that he is almost shouting about the blind alley. Everybody knows about the effects of unhealthy junk food, but there are not many alternatives to it. So, most consumers keep buying the food that is easy to find and widely advertised.

The author does not offer any specific solutions which could change the whole food industry, the way of thinking of the communities and their attitude to food as such. However, he mentions the warning labels which could help the people make informed choices. The article does not leave the reader indifferent. Its main purpose is to provoke thoughts and the author is successful in doing that.