Where are the Lines in Selling?

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We all know the purpose of advertising: To sell. But, at what point does advertising cross the line from selling to deceiving?

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ThIrw_LpuRA

This commercial positions Nutella as a nutritious food. A mom filed a lawsuit in 2012 when she said she was "duped" by the ad, and fed the chocolatey spread to her 4-year old child believing it was healthy. (Nutritionally, Nutella is a sugary treat with little health value.) The class-action lawsuit settled for about $3 million, with $2.5 going to others who spoke up about being deceived by the ad.

AHA! Advertisers frame products by carefully choosing what information to include, and what to leave out.

Key Question # 4 What values, lifestyles and points of view are represented in or omitted from this message?

Core Concept # 4 Media have embedded values and points of view.

Grade Level 6-12

Materials Display screen(s) available for the class.

ACTIVITY: Watch the commercial as a class, and ask students to identify what lifestyle values are included in this ad. Answers might be: healthy living, family, parenting, etc. Ask students to break into groups of 3-5, and discuss amongst themselves what was left out of the ad to make it deceptive. (Sugar content in Nutella, what is considered a healthy breakfast by experts, etc.) Then ask each student group to consider the Five Key Questions of Media Literacy as they
write an outline of a more accurate (but still appealing) Nutella commercial. The groups then take turns describing their more accurate Nutella commercials to the class.