

Bond University
Research Repository



Social Marketing: Who's Right and Whose Right to Say so

Holden, Stephen

Published: 01/01/2012

Document Version:
Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

Licence:
CC BY-NC-ND

[Link to publication in Bond University research repository.](#)

Recommended citation(APA):
Holden, S. (2012). *Social Marketing: Who's Right and Whose Right to Say so*. Poster session presented at Research Week 2012, Gold Coast, Australia.

General rights

Copyright and moral rights for the publications made accessible in the public portal are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing publications that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.

For more information, or if you believe that this document breaches copyright, please contact the Bond University research repository coordinator.

Social Marketing : Who's Right and Whose Right to Say So

Stephen S. Holden

Social marketing is :

... non-commercial marketing aimed at promoting a 'social good'

- vaccinate
- recycle
- breastfeed
- drive safely
- donate to charity
- use less electricity
- keep fit / lose weight
- drink less alcohol / quit smoking



Is social marketing ethical ?

The question is addressed here in a philosophical manner. That is to say :

- there are no data and
- there are no answers!

Social marketing's claim to being ethical is that it is for a 'social good', but...

- What is 'socially good' ?
- Who says so ?

E.g., vaccination marketing

Commercial marketers : CSL Biotherapies, sanofi pasteur, GlaxoSmithKline, Medimmune, Novartis, etc.



Public health agencies : Immunise Australia, Public Health Agency of Canada, CDC, WHO, etc.



Pro-Choice / Anti-vaccinators : Australian Vaccination Network (avn.org.au), ProCon.org, The Refusers (www.refusers.com), etc.



Who is more ethical ?

Commercial & social marketer promoting vaccinations : Both provide a 'social good'. This provides profit to the commercial marketer. What does it provide to the social marketer ?

Two social marketers deliver conflicting messages : Both for the 'social good'!

So, who's right, and whose right to say so ?

Ethical issues raised...

- **liberty** : freedom of choice denied, the 'greater good' dominates individual rights
- **ends & means** : marketing is about influence; do the ends (ever) justify the means ?
- **paternalism** : government dictates to the public as parents dictate to children – and they may be wrong
- **free riding** : non-vaccinators are protected by herd immunity, and the 'herd' benefits from vaccinators who experience an adverse reaction , i.e., they 'take one for the team'!

Vaccinate against myth-understanding



Social marketing is not inherently ethical (even though 'social good' is the objective).