

# Protect Free Speech by Rejecting Content Regulation

In recent years, the First Amendment's protections have been increasingly extended to commercial speech, such as product advertisements. However, significant gaps still exist; in areas such as the health benefits of moderate alcohol consumption, federal prohibitions still restrict the public's ability to learn about well-documented scientific findings.

As new technologies provide an ever-growing array of media, Congress will face increasing pressure to impose content regulations—including regulations on video games and on social networking websites like Facebook. As portable devices such as iPods and cell phones

become increasingly equipped for video and multimedia playback, regulation advocates will begin to push for laws governing what can and cannot be viewed in public areas. Most of these regulations will initially arise under the guise of protecting children from harmful material, but regardless of the reasoning, all such regulations should be avoided. Parents, not government regulators, are best equipped to determine what content is appropriate for their children, and all such regulatory ventures pose a threat to free speech.

*Cord Blomquist and Wayne Crews*