Author’s response to reviews

Title: Outdoor Advertising, Obesity, and Soda Consumption: A cross-sectional study

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Author’s response to reviews: see over
Dear Editors,

Thank you for the provisional acceptance of our manuscript, “Outdoor Advertising, Obesity, and Soda Consumption: A cross-sectional study.” We appreciate the work of the reviewers and the new comments.

Please see below the responses to the reviewer’s new comments. Please let us know if you have further questions. We look forward to working towards the publication of our work.

Sincerely,

Lenard Lesser, MD MSHS

Reviewer: Karen Pasch
1. Please include a description of the outdoor advertising that was included in this study, was it all free-standing advertising, advertising on buildings, or any form of advertising. This information would be helpful to put the results in context as well as provide a comparison for other studies which have documented other forms of outdoor advertising.

Response: We further expanded this clarification in the methods. All outdoor advertisements were included, except those that were on storefronts. The storefront dataset was collected separately and could not be used for this analysis.

2. How was the quality control supervisor’s data used to ensure reliability?

Response: We added a sentence on this. The data collected by the supervisor was compared to the data collected by the field staff. These checks were done throughout the study and we found that agreement was >80% throughout.

3. Please clarify the missing data numbers, complete data was available on 2,589 people out of the 2,881 respondents but then it also says that 244 were excluded because of missing data (not the same as 2881-2589).

Response: We clarified this in the methods. We started with 2881, subtracted 48 with low weight status, then subtracted 244 with missing data. This left us with 2589 in the main analysis.

4. While the simulation models may be predictive models, on page 5 of the text where it states that “logistic regression was used to test which factors “predicted” whether a census tract…” should be “which factors were associated with” as I
believe these regression models were not the simulated models and given the cross-sectional nature of the data this would be better stated as association rather than causation.

Response: We made the recommended change to indicate an association.

5. While one study has used the percentage-based measure of advertising, I am not sure that it would be referred to as “the standard measure”. I believe this is one way of measuring outdoor advertising that has certain strengths and limitations. It would be better to state that “This measure has been used previously when analyzing outdoor advertising.”

Response: We changed this to make this distinction.

Reviewer: Bridget Kelly

1. However, regarding the use of % ads for food as the measure of exposure, it would be appropriate to make a note in the discussion that this approach has some limitations where small numbers of ads are present.

Response: We added a paragraph to discuss this in the discussion.