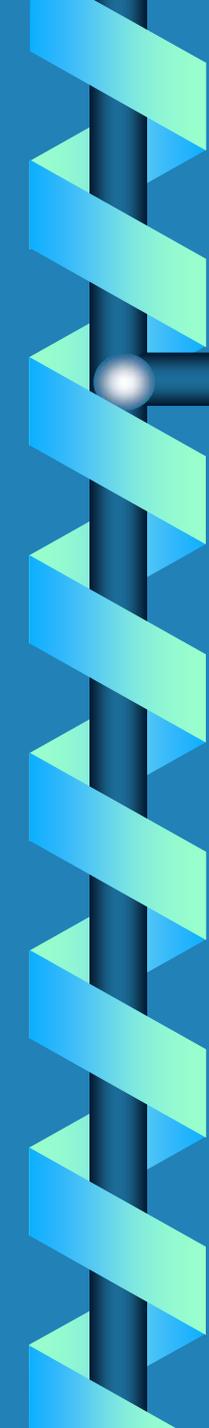


From Evidence to action

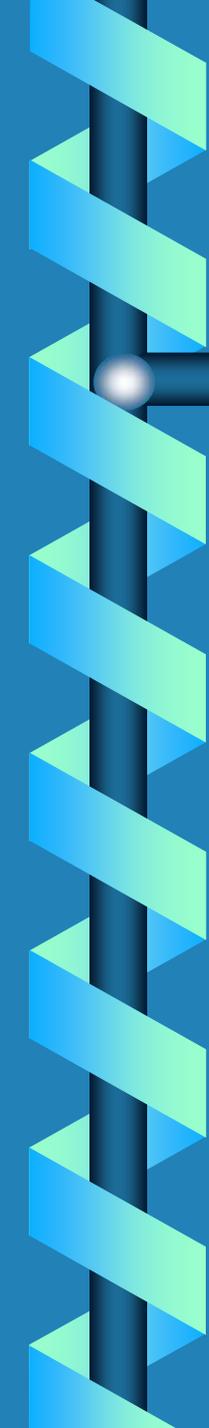
Dr Derek Yach
Executive Director
Noncommunicable Diseases and Mental Health

Postgraduate Course for Training in Medicine
World Health Organization, Geneva
Tuesday, 4 March 2003



When does evidence lead to policy change?

When does evidence lead to action?



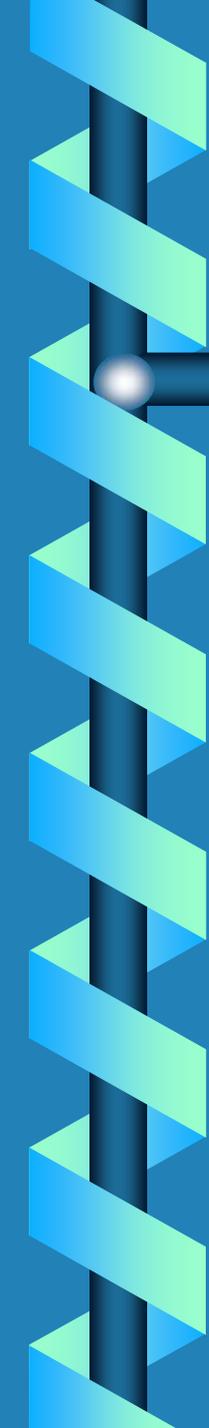
Determinants of Success

- ◆ early involvement of all stakeholders
- ◆ avoidance of “losers”
- ◆ passion and communication competence



But for many risk factors for chronic diseases

- ◆ stakeholders are active proponents of risk
- ◆ economic losses are perceived or real
- ◆ researchers talk to researchers



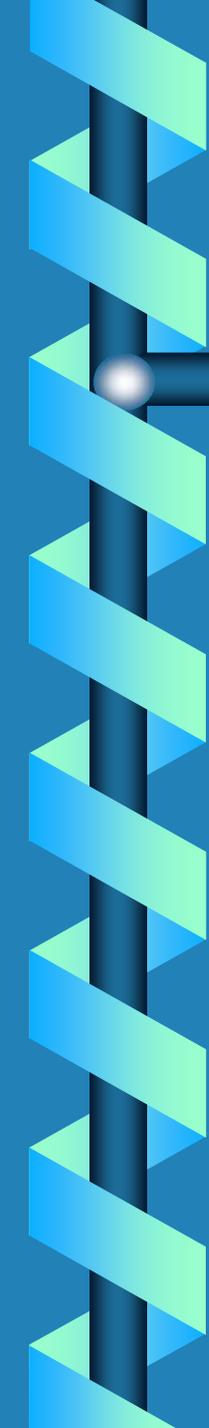
What are the major risks and who are the stakeholders?

Tobacco: companies, advertisers, hospitality, farmers.

Diets rich in saturated fat, sugar, salt: companies, advertisers, multiple “special interests”, retailers, farmers.

Alcohol: companies, retailers, advertisers, sports groups.

Physical inactivity: sports goods and organization, urban designers, schools.



Strategies used to block the use of evidence

- ◆ deny
- ◆ dispute
- ◆ propose alternatives
- ◆ block funding

HOW INDUSTRY MANIPULATES SCIENCE
AND GAMBLERS WITH YOUR FUTURE

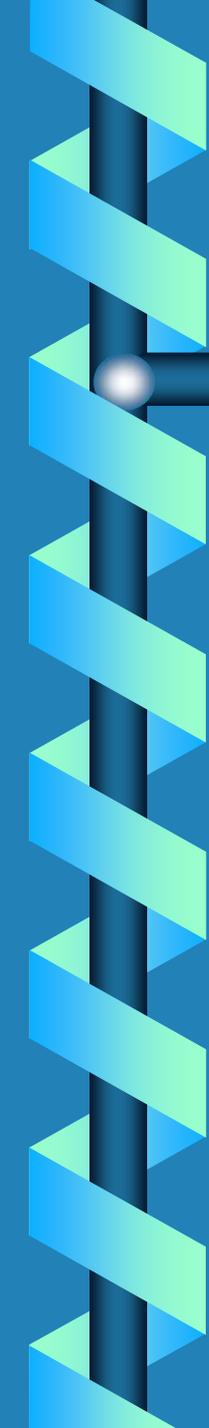
**TRUST US,
WE'RE
EXPERTS!**

**SHELDON RAMPTON
AND
JOHN STAUBER**

AUTHORS OF
**TOXIC SLUDGE
IS GOOD FOR YOU!**

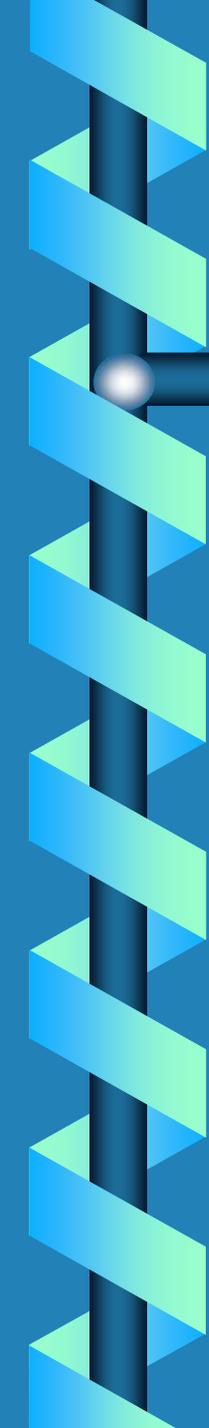


*"If you want to know how the world wags, and
who's wagging it, here's your answer."—Bill Moyers*



Case studies

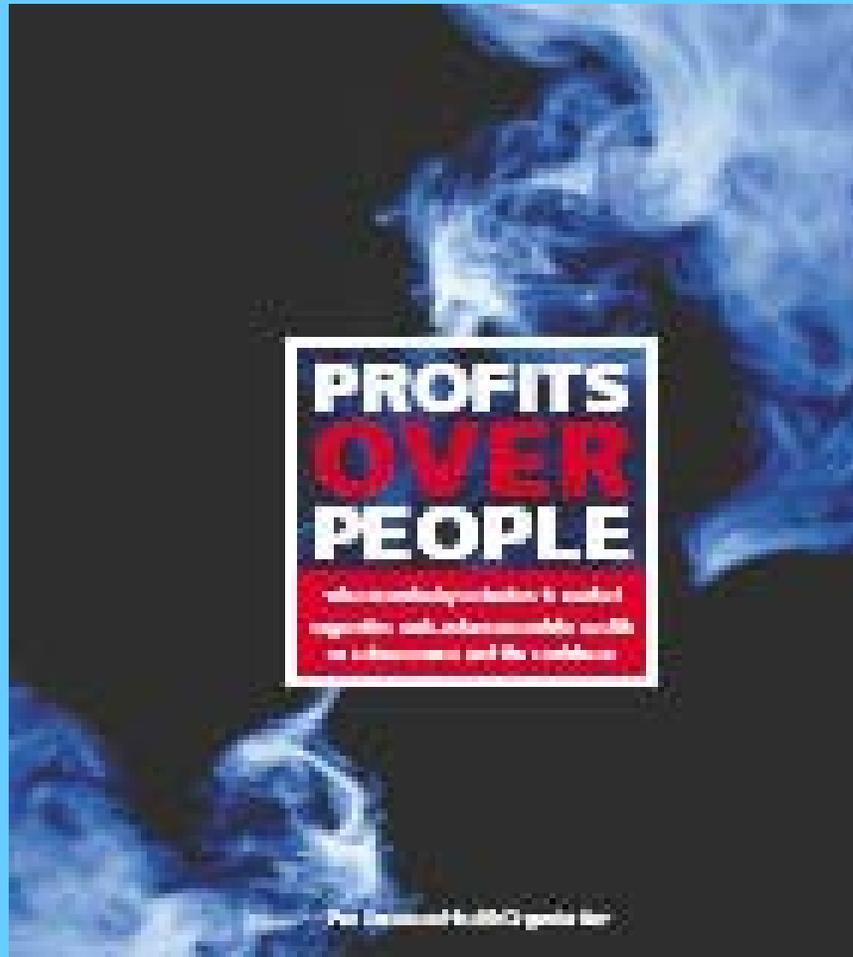
- Tobacco
- Sugar
- Salt
- Alcohol

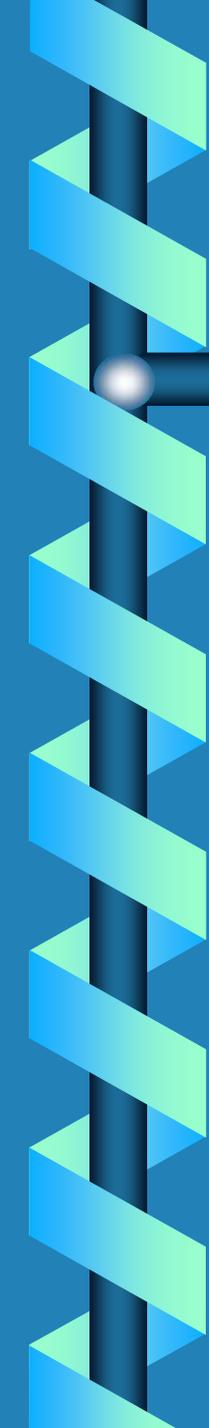


Tobacco

- Decades of documented industry deception
- Evidence kept in dispute
- Corporate social responsibility

Pan American Health Organization





Sugar

- Eat food and drinks containing sugar sparingly and not between meals
(Department of Health, SA)
- Eat/use sugar and sugar containing foods and drinks in moderation
(Association of Dietetics in SA)

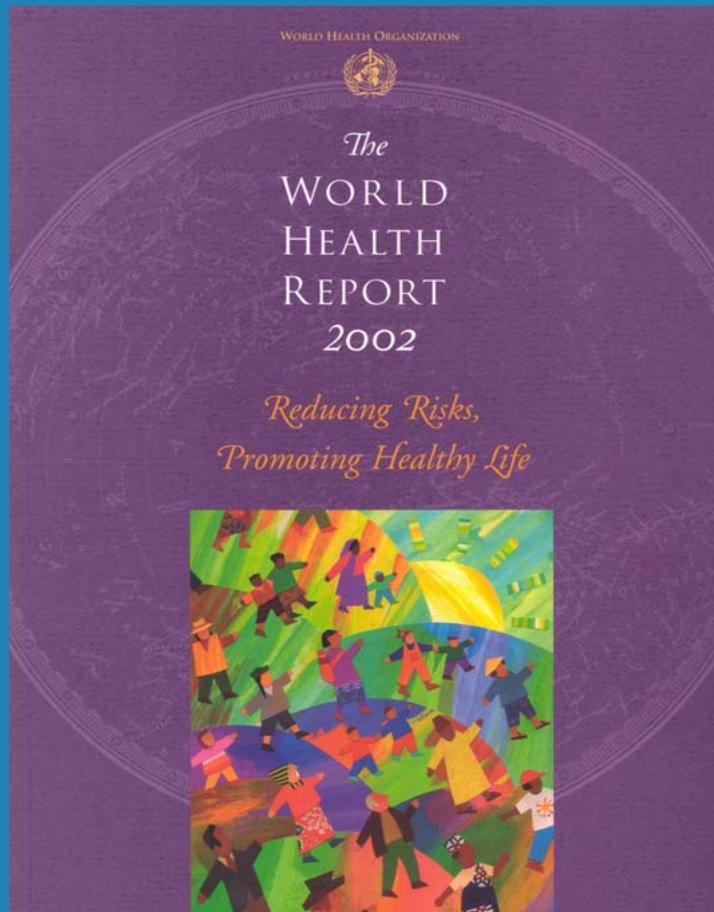
MARION NESTLE

food
POLITICS



HOW THE FOOD INDUSTRY INFLUENCES NUTRITION AND HEALTH

Salt





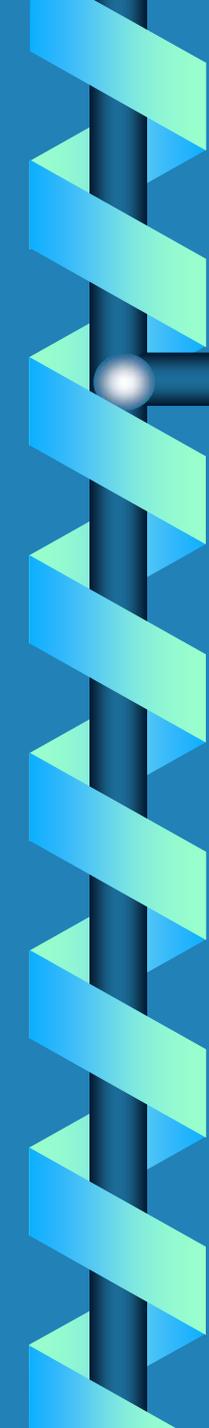
“Reduced consumption of salt undermines efforts to iodize salts and prevent iodine deficiency.”

Salt industry submission to WHO



Alcohol

- Does advertising lead to increased consumption in youth?
- What proportion of total alcohol consumed is.
- Drunk by underage youth and excessively by adults?



Concluding thoughts

- Evidence exists in a social/political reality
- Action is often independent of sound science
- Political commitment to science and its application is critical to success