# WN *The issue*

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## *Nutrition, nourishment, health, well-being*
## The struggle continues




*Above from left: Claudio Schuftan meets Ronald McDonald. Victor Dzau, the US Institutes of Medicine, and Pepsi-Co. Robert Lustig gets institutionalised. Susan George and transnationals. Ancel Keys, inventor of K rations. Flavio Valente on corporate land-grabs. Below from left: David Werner and Halfdan Mahler on social medicine. Jane Kramer on Claudia Roden and Geoffrey Cannon on Pablo Neruda, who inspire all who love good food and true nourishment. Urban Jonsson on causes of states of nutrition and health. A celebration of Robert McCarrison.*

### Editor's note

People above are shown in bold type. First the upper row. In *Update:* **Claudio Schuftan** tells the sad tale of **Ronald McDonald** in Vietnam; **Victor Dzau**, the US Institutes of Medicine, and PepsiCo; **Robert Lustig** plans to eliminate diabesity; **Susan George** anatomises transnational power politics; the story of **Ancel Keys** and K rations; and for *Big Food Watch* **Flavio Valente** of FIAN International on the scandal of corporate land-grabbing in Africa. Second, the lower row. The WHO World Health Assembly is next month: this issue's cover *Commentary* (left) by **David Werner** with a contribution by **Halfdan Mahler** is about the need to revive universal primary health care, as in the WHO Alma Ata Declaration. In *Inspiration* we celebrate **Claudia Roden**; and **Pablo Neruda** is the hero of Geoffrey Cannon's *What do you think?* column. *Feedback* has **Urban Jonsson** on causation; Claudio Schuftan on Cicely Wiilliams; Marcela Reyes on Pablo Neruda; Cedric de Voil and Geoffrey Cannon on **Robert McCarrison**; and Katharine Jenner on Action on Sugar.

# *Update. Transnational penetration in the South*
# Booming obesity in Asia



**BIG FOOD WATCH**




*It was not Chairman Mao's plan that in 2010, 200 million Chinese people would be overweight or obese, and that rates of diabetes would rocket. Those were the days before Ronald McDonald*

*The Issue team reports:* 'Growing consumption of fast foods and sugar-rich soft drinks'. According to the World Bank, this is a fuel for China's explosive increase in overweight and obesity, now affecting 200 million people, one-fifth of the billion people in the world so affected. Rates of obesity in cities in China are projected to reach the levels now current in the US and US and UK, between 2025 and 2030. More frightening are rates of pre-diabetis states and of diabetes in China, which were 0.67 of the population in the 1980, and have now multiplied by a factor of 25, to 10 per cent, a rate that is already higher than in the US.

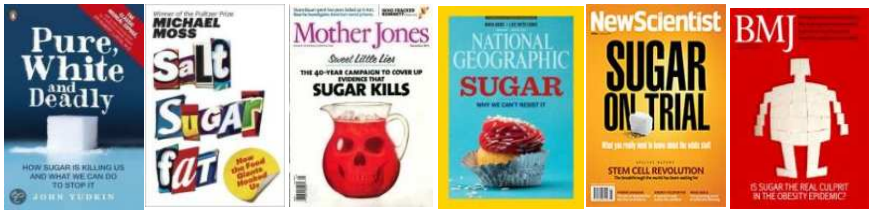
In *Update* this issue we carry two stories on South-East Asia. One by Claudio Schuftan is on the opening of the first McDonald's outlet in Vietnam. The other summarises some of the findings of the World Bank report. It is not suggested that McDonald's is the chief cause of obesity in Asia, most of whose countries are already deeply penetrated by other transnational burger chains, and also by cola and ultra-processed snack transnationals.

*Access Update story on pages 311-313 here*
*Access Update story on pages 314-315 here.*



*Commentary*

# Time for Big Sugar to bite back




*In the last couple of years, sugar has been hammered in the popular media, and in books, and in specialist journals and by dedicated organisations. But Big Sugar is not yet defeated, as we will see*

*The Update team reports:* Big Sugar has been pounded by senior scientists, by public health officials, by investigative journalists, and by activists and bloggers. But the force is not yet against sugar. The big issue now is the recommendation by the WHO 'NUGAG' expert advisory group that sugar consumption be limited to 10 per cent of dietary energy. We have been here before. A decade ago the US government drafted in William Steiger (below), to head up the US delegation to the World Health Assembly (WHA), charged to sabotage the UN policy that sugar consumption should be limited. He largely succeeded. Next month the WHA meets again. Will the US delegation be headed by another hit-man? Will Michelle Obama tell her husband to be righteous in the cause of public health nutrition? Will WHO director-general Margaret Chan stand firm? We will see.




*Access this commentary on pages 330-335 here.*
*Also access the Update on Robert Lustig on pages 317-318 here*

*Cover commentary. Primary health care*

# The revival of 'health for all'



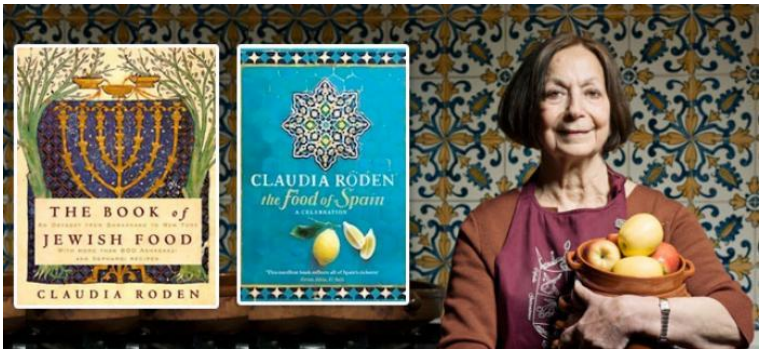
*The WN cover picture above shows some of the young professionals working with Partners in Health in Haiti, committed to restoring basic primary health care services after the earthquake*

*Maria Hamlin-Zuniga and Claudio Schuftan report:* We write in the month before the WHO World Health Assembly, whose principal duty is to uphold good and fair states of health worldwide. This it has failed to do. This is the worst of times, for universal publicly funded primary health care, an essential foundation for good states of population health, and for eradication of mass food insecurity, undernutrition, and other forms of malnutrition. Adequately funded, appropriately resourced, accessible primary health care services, with staff and helpers known to the communities they serve, are essential to states of good health and well-being. But the commitments and promises made by UN member states to 'Health for All' in the WHO *Alma Ata Declaration* have been set aside and broken. Instead, all over the world public health has been privatised, and even the UK general practitioner services, within its publicly funded National Health Service, is close to collapse.

But this could be the best of times, at least looking forward in hope to the future. The hope is felt by everybody who holds to the vision of the human right to 'Health for All', including young people These include those shown above from the US in Cuba, and those on the cover of this issue of *WN* in Haiti, studying and practicing social medicine in partnership with the communities supporting and upholding their basic needs and rights. Their commitment, ours, and that of fellow contributor David Werner, whose life is devoted to the health and rights of impoverished communities especially in rural Mexico, is to an equitable future.

*Access this commentary on pages 345-365 here.*

## *Inspiration. Claudia Roden*
# Cooking and meals. Culture and civilisation




*Scholar and author Claudia Roden has dedicated her life to discerning and explaining the central place of food systems and cultures based on shared meals prepared from local and national produce.*

*The Update team reports:* Claudia Roden is our *Inspiration*. She understands more of the meaning of nourishment maybe than any other living writer. Now read on!

*Access Inspiration on pages 366-371 here.*

## *What do you think? Dietary guidelines*
# The Brazilian principles of nutrition



*The new official national Brazilian dietary guidelines are based on foods and most of all on freshly prepared dishes and meals (as above) enjoyed in company. They are also guided by stated principles*

*Geoffrey Cannon reports:* In the last *WN* we gave a short preview of the new official national Brazilian dietary guidelines. These are now out for consultation in Brazil, and also are being translated into Spanish and English, adapted for Latin America and for all English-speaking countries. *WN* readers will recognise much of the thinking in the report. It also includes, perhaps for the first time in any report on food and nutrition, a set of explicit principles. These guided the teams at the Brazilian Ministry of Health and the University of São Paulo, supported by advice from many others, in their work. The principles are below.

## Principles that shape these Guidelines

***Health is more than the absence of disease***
Complete health includes physical, mental and social well-being

***Nourishment is more than the consumption of nutrients***
Nourishment involves nutrients, and the foods, drinks and meals that provide nutrients, and the family, social, cultural, other aspects of eating and drinking

***Healthy diets derive from sustainable food systems***
Healthy eating habits depend on food systems that protect and respect the natural environment that is the source of foods

***Information enlightens consumers and empowers citizens***
Reliable information is essential to enable consumers to make better decisions, and it supports citizens in actions that shape healthy environments

***Dietary guidelines need to be based on a full range of evidence***
Sound recommendations for good health and protection against disease take into account evidence from various sources and disciplines

***Dietary guidelines should promote food and nutrition security***
Equitable dietary recommendations are consistent with and contribute to guarantee of the basic human right to adequate and nourishing food

## *What do you think? Pablo Neruda*
# Poetry, politics, and nourishment



*Diego Rivera made this masterpiece showing the whole story of Latin America to be used as the cover of the first edition of Pablo Neruda's Canto General, his epic poem on the same theme*

*Geoffrey Cannon writes:* We can discern the nature of the food systems and dietary patterns of any country by the quality of the poetry written in that country.

Conversely, great poets whose work is from the gut, heart and soul as well as the head, need to be nourished in all senses by good food and great meals enjoyed in company, to write their best work. This is my theory in my column this issue, with the example of my hero Pablo Neruda – his *Elemental Odes* obviously, but his erotic and political poems also. Good food delights the senses. Enjoy!

*Access Geoffrey Cannon on Pablo Neruda on pages 372-385 here.*

## *Network. Food production in nature*

## Where the bee sucks, there suck we




*This issue in Network the picture is of a honeybee, like that above (right), also covered in pollen. We need bees to pollinate plants that supply food, but chemical agriculture is killing them off*

*Fabio Gomes writes:* Here is an extract from the *Time* magazine cover story in August last year. 'You can thank the *Apis mellifera*, better known as the Western honeybee, for 1 in every 3 mouthfuls you'll eat today. Honeybees are the "glue that holds our agricultural system together" as Hannah Nordhaus put it in her book *The Beekeeper's Lament.* But that glue is failing. Bee hives are dying off or disappearing, so much so that commercial beekeepers are being pushed out of the business'. Another reason to need to see the nutrition big picture. No bees, impoverished food.

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*Access Network on bees on page 400 here.*

## Status

*The issue* is compiled by members of the editorial team. Readers may use material here if *WN* is cited. Please cite as: Anon. Nutrition, nourishment, health, well-being. The struggle continues. [*The issue*] *World Nutrition* April 2014, **5**, 4, 301-307. Obtainable at www.wphna.org/worldnutrition. Contributions to *World Nutrition* are the copyright and responsibility of their authors. They should not be taken to be the view or policy of the World Public Health Nutrition Association (the Association) or of any affiliated or associated bodies, unless this is explicitly stated.