WN *The issue*

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Visions of transformation
Friends and enemies of health, well-being



Writing and featured in WN this month are (top) David Legge; Delen de la Paz; Jorge Lemann, Warren Buffett; John Dearing, Mark Wahlqvist; Raj Patel, Amit Srivastava; then (centre) Ashok Bhurtyal; Hetty Einzig, Shauna Murray, Tim Flannery, Sarah Perkins, Peter Macreadie; Anne-Emanuelle Birn, John D Rockefeller, then (bottom) Bill Gates; Geoffrey Cannon, Vandana Shiva, Eduardo Galeano; Ramón Vera Herrera, Sean Lucan, Anthony Fardet, Claudio Schuftan

The Issue team reports: Our guest editorial (page 334) is by David Legge. In *Update* (starting on page 346) Delen de la Paz challenges WHO; Jorge Lemann and Warren Buffett on making billions from junk food. John Dearing and Mark Wahlqvist on how industrialisation is changing China; Raj Patel and Amit Srivastava say India needs guidelines like Brazil; and Ashok Bhurtyal sees *Visions*. *Balance* by Hetty Einzig (page 372) is on what scentists feel about climate disruption, with Shauna Murray, Tim Flannery, Sarah Perkins and Peter Macreadie. Then we have *Hot Stuff* (page 383) by Anne-Emanuelle Birn featuring John D Rockefeller and Bill Gates. In *What Do You Think* (page 408) Geoffrey Cannon's hero is Vandana Shiva, and Eduardo Galeano writes on junk culture and junk food. *Feedback* (beginning on page 424) includes letters by Ramón Vera Herrera on the catastrophe of 'free trade' in Mexico, Sean Lucan on a tale of two puddings, Anthony Fardet on food classification that works, and Claudio Schuftan on safety nets, SUN and MOON.



WN *Big Food Watch. World Health Organization*

Sleepwalking with the enemy



The World Health Organization is committed to partner with the 'private sector', code for transnational corporations, including in initiatives that are supposed to end childhood obesity

May is the month of the WHO World Health Assembly. The 68th WHA takes place this year in the week between Monday 18th and Tuesday 26 May. In this issue *WN* considers two topics on the minds of WHO officials and representatives of WHO member states this year. One is 'engagement with "non-state actors" and in particular 'the private sector'. The other is the WHO Commission on Ending Childhood Obesity, or ECHO. These relate. In practice, what 'the private sector' means, is transnational food and drink product corporations and their trade and front organisations. Thus, as explained by a WHO official, 'the member states have mandated WHO to work with the private sector and therefore they [ECHO] are working within their mandate when they engage with the private sector'. Meaning, that partners in UN work to end childhood obesity include Coca-Cola, Pepsi-Co, Kelloggs, Nestlé, and other purveyors of ultra-processed energy-dense fatty or sugary products aggressively advertised to children. This bizarre situation has been described as 'sleepwalking with the enemy'.

Access Update on WHO, a grim diagnosis, here



WN *Hot stuff. Dietary guidelines. US*

The dog is hot



'No candidate for any office can hope to get elected in this country without being photographed eating a hot dog'. Nelson Rockefeller, US vice-president in the Gerald Ford administration, 1974-1977

The Update team writes. For the first time, the experts who draft the US dietary guidelines have recommended less red meat and less processed meat. Their report is out for review until 8 May. The US meat industry is furious, and has dreamed up a 'consumer campaign', Hands off our Hot Dog, whose message is below. They may get support from the current and former US presidents, seen above.

> Hot dog, sausage, bacon and salami lovers stand together as Americans in favor of a balanced diet that includes meat and poultry of all kinds. We stand together as people who value personal choice and reject taxes on foods that elite academics deem unhealthy. We assert ourselves as intelligent, free thinking people capable of making decisions that are best for our families' nutrition needs, traditions and personal budgets.
>
> As meat and poultry consumers, we recognize the diverse offerings in the meat and poultry case that include time-honored traditional formulations, low-sodium offerings, lean products, organic and natural. In response to the Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee's recent, anemic recommendations to eat lower amounts of red and processed meats we say, unequivocally and without hesitation 'Hands off my hot dog!'

Access Update team on the Dietary Guidelines for Americans here



WN *Hot stuff*

Project Phoenix



Is nutrition as a profession and as practiced now a burned-out case? Some think so. And if so, can a phoenix rise out of the ashes, able to fly through the flames of the age we live in now, and thrive?

The Update team writes. Last month we announced *Project Phoenix*. It sets out the charge that conventional nutrition science as a burned-out case. This is not a new concern. Worries have abounded for a long time. Here as one example is a statement made in a *Public Health Nutrition* editorial seven years ago, on policies and programmes to address global undernutrition:

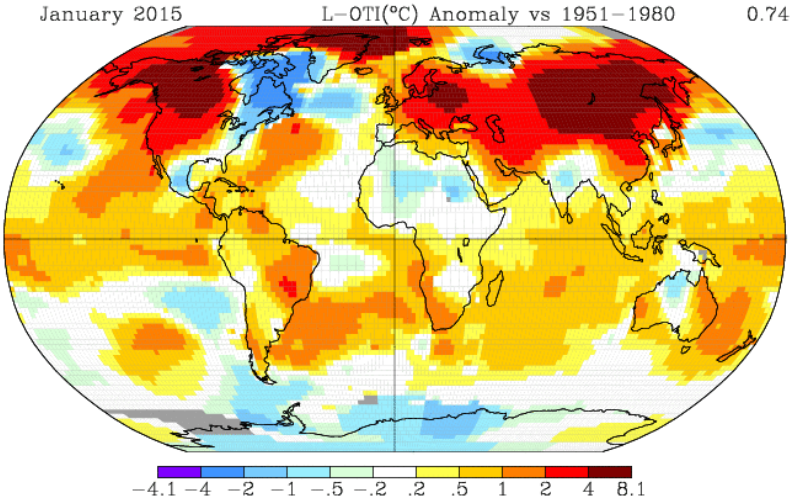
> 'Laborious, duplicative, weak, grossly insufficient, poorly targeted, fragmented, dysfunctional'. These are judgements of the 'global architecture' designed and built to stem world undernutrition. Some architecture! These scorching words are contained in the invited commentary by one of our associate editors, Ricardo Uauy. The judgements are not personal. He is co-author of the culminating paper of a series of five on the theme of maternal and child undernutrition, published earlier this year in *The Lancet*.

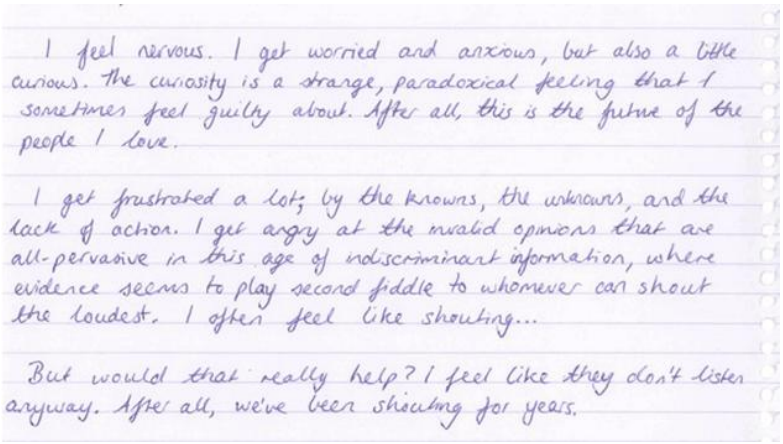
The charge now, is that conventional nutrition is sick as a science as well as in practice, suffering from irrelevance and incompetence, as implied above, and also from ignorance, obscurity, obsolescence, complacency and venality. *The Big Food Watch WN* series has published a number of contributions on links between nutrition organisations and conferences and transnational corporations, but the issues go far beyond wrong use of money. In this issue of *WN* we publish the first of our *Project Phoenix* series of indictments – not, note, judgements – of conventional nutrition. Throughout, as well as exposing the problems, we propose solutions, and look forward to vigorous debate in our *Feedback* section.



WN *Climate disruption. Balance*

Speaking, acting from our hearts and souls





I feel nervous. I get worried and anxious, but also a little curious. The curiosity is a strange, paradoxical feeling that I sometimes feel guilty about. After all, this is the future of the people I love.

I get frustrated a lot; by the knowns, the unknowns, and the lack of action. I get angry at the invalid opinions that are all-pervasive in this age of indiscriminant information, where evidence seems to play second fiddle to whomever can shout the loudest. I often feel like shouting...

But would that really help? I feel like they don't listen anyway. After all, we've been shouting for years.

Facts. Month after month the hottest temperatures are being recorded since records began in 1880. So what are we going to do, as professionals and citizens ? Climate scientists come from the heart and soul and express their feelings in their own words and handwriting, as in the example above

Hetty Einzig writes: 'I see a group of people sitting in a boat, happily waving, taking pictures on the way, not knowing that this boat is floating right into a powerful and deadly waterfall'.This is one of the testimonies of Australian scientists that we publish this month. Another is above. We combine the head facts of science with the heart and soul emotions and testimonies that we all experience and express as whole humans. In common with the climate scientists who speak this month in *WN*, I believe that our great hope as we all face the facts about climate disruption is that as professionals and citizens, we will move from knowledge to decision to action, and come from the body, heart and soul as well as from the head.

Access Climate disruption. Balance. Hetty Einzig here



WN *Hot stuff. Philanthrocapitalism*

The hundred billion dollar Bill



Bill Gates, from webmeister of the world to philanthropist dedicated to save the world from itself. Above, on the cover of Time magazine in 1984 1995 1996 1997 1998 1999 2008 2010, and on the cover of Vanity Fair, The Economist, Fortune, Forbes in 2002, 2006, 2010, 2011

Anne-Emanuelle Birn writes. In my commentary on the Gates Foundation I show that 'philanthrocapitalism' touts the largesse and social-entrepreneurial mission of the new 1990s billionaires as unprecedented and capable of 'saving the world'. The $US2 billion-plus annual spending of US philanthropy has indeed made a second entrée into the international health and development arena, but the philanthrocapitalist approach, past and present, merits questioning.

The tenet that business models can (re)solve social problems, and are superior to redistributive, collectively deliberated policies of and actions by elected governments, masks a reality. Private enterprise approaches have been accompanied, facilitated, and made inevitable by deregulation, privatisation, government downsizing, and emphasis on short-term results over long-term sustainability. These models rest on the belief that 'the market' is infallible, despite ample evidence to the contrary.

Access Anne-Emanuelle Birn on the Gates Foundation here



WN *Balance Eduardo Galeano, Vandana Shiva*

The roots of nourishment and well-being





Eduardo Galeano and Vandana Shiva have spent their lives fighting for the rights of the people. In this issue of WN he writes about junk ways of life as the context for junk food, and she speaks about Mother Earth as the source of fertility and nourishment and sustained healthy ways of life

Geoffrey Cannon writes: It is hard to be nourished in the full sense, of mind, heart and soul, and of body too, within sick societies. Achievement of well-being at population and community levels, and personally too, depends on societies being or becoming healthy. Eduardo Galeano in Latin America, and Vandana Shiva in India, are both natural philosophers. They have always known this, and so are beacons throughout the world. Here they are above, with smiles and plants in hand. Vandana Shiva is 'my hero' in *What Do You Think?* this month. So also is Eduardo Galeano, who died in April, who writes on the oppression of junk ways of life and junk food.

Access Geoffrey Cannon on Vandana Shiva here
Access Geoffrey Cannon on Eduardo Galeano here