

Targeting Ultra-Processed Food to Improve Nutritional Health: The Value and Limits of a Framing



About the Speakers and Moderator:



Jenn Lacy-Nichols is research fellow working with the Victorian Health Promotion Foundation at the University of Melbourne. Her research explores relationships between corporations, politics and health. Her current program of work focusses on the development

of strategies to systematically monitor commercial political practices, and draws on tools and theories from political science, public health, data science and business studies. Jenn completed a DPhil at the University of Melbourne in 2019 that analysed the soft drink industry's political strategy to position itself as 'part of the solution' to obesity. Her subsequent research has continued to explore the theme of corporate co-optation and the risks and limitations of corporate 'harm minimisation' strategies and efforts to involve business actors in public health governance.



Kelly Brownell is Robert L. Flowers Professor of Public Policy, Professor of Psychology and Neuroscience, and Director Emeritus of the World Food Policy Center at Duke University. From 2013-2018 he served as Dean of the Sanford School of Public Policy at

Duke. Prior to joining the faculty at Duke, Brownell was at Yale University where he was the James Rowland Angell Professor of Psychology, Professor of Epidemiology and Public Health, and Director of the Rudd Center for Food Policy and Obesity. While at Yale he served as Chair of the Department of Psychology and as Head of Silliman College.

Brownell was elected to membership in the National Academy of Medicine (formerly the Institute of Medicine) in 2006 and that same year Time magazine listed Kelly Brownell among "The World's 100 Most Influential People" in its special Time 100 issue featuring those "...whose power, talent or moral example is transforming the world." Among the honors for his work, he has received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the American Psychological Association, Graduate Mentoring Award from Yale, the James McKeen Cattell Award from the New York Academy of Sciences, the Distinguished Alumni Award from Purdue University, the Lifetime Achievement Award from Rutgers University, and the Distinguished Scientific Award for the Applications of Psychology from the American Psychological Association.

Dr. Brownell has published 15 books and more than 350 scientific articles and chapters. He has served as President of several national organizations and has advised the White House, members of congress, governors, state attorneys general, world health and nutrition organizations, and media leaders on issues of nutrition, obesity, and public policy.



Paula Johns was born and grew up in Brazil. She obtained a Master of Arts Degree in English and International Development Studies in Denmark, at Roskilde University Center. She is the co-founder and director of the ACT Health Promotion (former Alliance for the

Control of Tobacco Use), a Brazilian coalition of over a thousand members, created in 2003 to support the process of ratification and implementation of the WHO-FCTC in Brazil. Since 2013, ACT has expanded its scope of work to include the agenda of the NCDs. ACT is also one of the leading organizations of the Brazilian Alliance for Healthy and Adequate Food formed in 2016 to support food policy issues. Johns has been a presenter at conferences and other events on tobacco control, other risk factors for NCDs, Advocacy and civil society mobilization issues nationally and internationally. She is also a former chair of the Board of Directors of the FCA – Framework Convention Alliance, former Board Member of the NCD Alliance, currently a Board Member of GAPA - Global Alcohol Policy Alliance. Johns is also an Ashoka Fellow.



Alejandro Cavillo Unna was part of the group that founded Greenpeace Mexico. He worked 12 years at Greenpeace, 8 years as climate campaigner and 5 years as Executive Director and campaign director. He founded El Poder del Consumidor, EPC (The Consumer

Power) in 2006, where he serves as the current director. EPC promote the creation of the Healthy Food Alliance (ASA, in Spanish), a network of more than 30 civil society organizations that push for food regulations. EPC and ASA has been a central actor from the civil society to obtain a soda tax, a warning front labelling and guidelines for a regulation of food and beverage inside schools. He is member of The Lancet Commission on Obesity and was invited to advisory groups by the Panamerican Health Organization.

Moderator



Nicholas Freudenberg is Distinguished Professor of Public Health at the CUNY Graduate School of Public Health and Health Policy and a Founding Director and Senior Faculty Fellow at the CUNY Urban Food Policy Institute. His research and scholarship focus on

diet-related chronic diseases, urban health, the evaluation of complex urban interventions, and the role of the food industry in health and disease. For 30 years he has assisted NYC organizations to plan, implement, and evaluate policies, programs, and advocacy campaigns to improve community health and reduce health inequities, and he was the co-founder, with Janet Poppendieck, of the NYC Food Policy Center at Hunter College. He holds a PhD and a Master's degree in Health Policy and Management from the Columbia University School of Public Health.

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Recent research suggests that ultraprocessed food – industrially prepared food high in fats, sugar, salt, additives and preservatives – makes a major contribution to the global and local rise in premature deaths and preventable illnesses caused by unhealthy diets. In this forum, researchers and activists discuss the utility of the ultraprocessed food frame for guiding more effective food policies to improve nutritional health and health equity.

Additional Resources:

Lacy-Nichols, J., & Freudenberg, N. (2022). Opportunities and limitations of the ultra-processed food framing. *Nature Food*, 3(12), 975-977. <https://www.nature.com/articles/s43016-022-00670-0.epdf>

Duke Sanford, World Food Policy Center, <https://wfpc.sanford.duke.edu>

ACT Promoção da Saúde, <https://actbr.org.br/>

El Poder del Consumidor, <https://elpoderdelconsumidor.org/>

Koios, D., Machado, P., & Lacy-Nichols, J. (2022). Representations of ultra-processed foods: a global analysis of how dietary guidelines refer to levels of food processing. *International Journal of Health Policy and Management*, 11(11), 2588-2599. https://www.ijhpm.com/article_4197_5c4f5865deeba06d449e9c9d745d9c24.pdf

Quinn, M., Jordan, H., & Lacy-Nichols, J. (2021). Upstream and downstream explanations of the harms of ultra-processed foods in national dietary guidelines. *Public Health Nutrition*, 24(16), 5426-5435. <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/public-health-nutrition/article/upstream-and-downstream-explanations-of-the-harms-of-ultraprocessed-foods-in-national-dietary-guidelines/221A3363876F73440041CFB7FA9ACEC1>

Meat & Livestock Australia, *What is Fake Meat?* <https://www.goodmeat.com.au/health-nutrition/fake-meat/>

Diary Australia, *What is the difference between processed foods and 'ultra-processed'? Which category does dairy fall into?* <https://www.dairy.com.au/dairy-matters/you-ask-we-answer/what-is-the-difference-between-processed-foods-and-ultra-processed>

Monteiro, C. A., Cannon, G., Levy, R. B., Moubarac, J. C., Louzada, M. L., Rauber, F., ... & Jaime, P. C. (2019). Ultra-processed foods: what they are and how to identify them. *Public health nutrition*, 22(5), 936-941. <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/public-health-nutrition/article/ultraprocessed-foods-what-they-are-and-how-to-identify-them/E6D744D714B1FF09D5BCA3E74D53A185>

Vignola, E. F., Nazmi, A., & Freudenberg, N. (2021). What makes ultra-processed food appealing? A critical scan and conceptual model. *World Nutrition*, 12(4), 136-175. <https://wphna.org/worldnutritionjournal/index.php/wn/article/view/805>

Upreti, Y. R., Acharya, D., Yogi, B. N., Devkota, B., & Bhandari, T. R. (2022). Multilevel factors appealing to junk food consumption among school children and adolescents: A systematic review. *Journal of Health Promotion*, 10(1), 13-26. <https://www.nepjol.info/index.php/jhp/article/view/50981>

Freudenberg, N., Lee, K., Buse, K., Collin, J., Crosbie, E., Friel, S., ... & Zenone, M. (2021). Defining priorities for action and research on the commercial determinants of health: a conceptual review. *American journal of public health*, 111(12), 2202-2211. <https://ajph.aphapublications.org/doi/full/10.2105/AJPH.2021.306491>

Brownell, K. D., & Horgen, K. B. (2004). *Food fight: The inside story of the food industry, America's obesity crisis, and what we can do about it.*

Brownell, K. D., & Warner, K. E. (2009). The perils of ignoring history: Big Tobacco played dirty and millions died. How similar is Big Food?. *The Milbank Quarterly*, 87(1), 259-294. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/j.1468-0009.2009.00555.x>