Strategic Science: Preventing Obesity & Improving Diet Through Policy

Christina A. Roberto, Ph.D.
Strategic Science

- Asking policy relevant questions
- Collaborating with Change Agents:
  - Policymakers & Regulators
  - Legal Officials
  - Advocacy or Community Groups
  - Industry Partners
  - The Public
- Communicating research findings

Roberto, Brownell, Swinburn, under review
Obesity & The Food Environment

• Nutrient poor, energy dense foods are:
  Widely available
  Not clearly labeled
  Heavily marketed
  Served in large portions
  Inexpensive
Today’s Talk

• Examples of Strategic Science
  • Menu labeling
  • Front of package food labeling
  • Child-Targeted Marketing
  • NYC Sugary Drink Portion Limit
What is Menu Labeling?
Menu Labeling Rationale

1. People don’t know the calories in restaurant food

1. If they did, they’d make lower calorie choices (at least some of the time)
Menu Labeling Rationale

1. People don’t know the calories in restaurant food

1. If they did, they’d make lower calorie choices (at least some of the time)
How Many Calories? 
How Much Fat?

Average person  2000 calories/day
< 65g fat

Chili’s Classic Nachos (Beef)

Calories  1720
Fat  108g
How Many Calories? How Much Fat?

Average person 2000 calories/day
< 65g

Outback Aussie Cheese Fries

Calories 1973
Fat 133g
How Many Calories
How Much Fat?

Average person

2000 calories/day
< 65g

Chevy’s Tostada Salad
(w/o dressing)

Calories  1500
Fat       91g
Menu Label Legislation Opposition

- Proposed Dec 2006 by NYC Board of Health

- Restaurant Industry strongly opposed it
Industry Argument

➢ Nutrition information is already available

Food to Feel Good About

Kids need a variety of foods and nutrients every day to help them grow strong, play long, and learn better in school. We're constantly looking at our menu to ensure we're giving our customers (including our youngest guests) a selection of balanced choices.
How Often Do Consumers Access Restaurant Nutrition Information?

Observational Study of 4 Chain Restaurants: McDonald’s, Burger King, Au Bon Pain, Starbucks

Nutrition Access Results

- Out of 4,311 people...
  - 6 (0.1%) looked at nutrition information

Conclusions:
- 1 in 1000 people use this nutrition info
- This is NOT an effective intervention
Menu Labeling Rationale

1. People don’t know the calories in restaurant food

1. If they did, they’d make lower calorie choices (at least some of the time)
Menu Labeling RCT

- 303 adults from New Haven community
- Recruited for study on market research
- Randomized to 1 of 3 Menu Conditions
- Focus group
- Ordered & ate food
- Dietary recall interview

Roberto et al, Am J Public Health, 2010
Menu Without Calorie Labels

Starters & Sides

Chicken Fingers
With honey mustard sauce

Buffalo Wings
With blue cheese dressing

French Fries

Fried Calamari

Onion Rings

Mozzarella Sticks
With marinara sauce

Salads

Turkey Cobb
Romaine, egg, turkey, cherry tomatoes, gorgonzola, croutons, carrots, bacon

Caesar
Romaine, Asiago cheese, croutons

Chef's
Field greens, smoked turkey, ham, bacon, Asiago cheese, tomato
## Starters & Sides

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Calories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chicken Fingers With honey mustard sauce</td>
<td>930</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buffalo Wings With blue cheese dressing</td>
<td>1500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French Fries</td>
<td>770</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fried Calamari</td>
<td>490</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onion Rings</td>
<td>1040</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mozzarella Sticks With marinara sauce</td>
<td>990</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Salads

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Calories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Turkey Cobb</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caesar</td>
<td>210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chef's</td>
<td>270</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Turkey Cobb: Romaine, egg, turkey, cherry tomatoes, gorgonzola, croutons, carrots, bacon

Caesar: Romaine, Asiago cheese, croutons

Chef's: Field greens, smoked turkey, ham, bacon, Asiago cheese, tomato
The recommended daily caloric intake for an average adult is 2000 calories.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Starters &amp; Sides</th>
<th>Calories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>With honey mustard sauce</td>
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<tr>
<td>Buffalo Wings</td>
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<tr>
<td>With blue cheese dressing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mozzarella Sticks</td>
<td>990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With marinara sauce</td>
<td>60</td>
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</table>

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<td>Romaine, egg, turkey, cherry tomatoes, gorgonzola, croutons, carrots, bacon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caesar</td>
<td>210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romaine, Aslago cheese, croutons</td>
<td></td>
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<td>270</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field greens, smoked turkey, ham, bacon, Aslago cheese, tomato</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Participants

93% completed Dietary Recall

Mean Age: $31 \pm 12$ years

Mean BMI: $25 \pm 6$ kg/m$^2$

50% Female

Racial/Ethnic Breakdown:
- Caucasian (55%)
- African American (20%)
- Pacific Islander (<1%)
- Other/Biracial (4%)
- Asian (16%)
- Hispanic (3%)
- American Indian (<1%)
Calories Ordered for Dinner

$p = 0.029, d = .32$

$p = 0.025, d = .31$

No Calories

2189

Calories

1862

Calories + Info

1859
Calories Eaten At Dinner

- No Calories: 1459 Calories
- Calories: 1335 Calories
- Calories+Info: 1256 Calories
Calories Eaten At Dinner

F (2,292) = 3.28, p = 0.04
Calories Eaten After Dinner

No Calories: 179
Calories: 294
Calories+Anchor: 177

$p = 0.024$
$d = .33$

$p = 0.019$
$d = .33$
## Evening Snack

| Snack          |  
|----------------|---
| No Calories    |  
| Calorie Labels |  
| Calories+Info  |  

\[ \chi^2 (2) = 11.5, \ p = .003 \]
Dinner + After Dinner Calories Eaten

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Calories</th>
<th>No Calories</th>
<th>Calories</th>
<th>Calories+Info</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1630</td>
<td>1625</td>
<td>1379</td>
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</table>

$p = 0.019$

$d = .33$
Where Did People Reduce Calories?

- No differences in % ordered caloric beverages/desserts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>% Ordered Appetizer/Side</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No Calories</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calorie Labels</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calories+Info</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$\chi^2 (2) = 6.0, p = .05$
Summary

- Calorie labels led to fewer calories:
  - Ordered
  - Eaten

- With just calories people ate more later

- Putting calories in context led to avg reduction of 250 calories
Patient Protection & Affordable Care Act

SEC. 4205.
NUTRITION LABELING OF STANDARD MENU ITEMS AT CHAIN RESTAURANTS

- Number of Calories

- Statement About Daily Caloric Intake

“A 2,000 calorie diet is used as the basis for general nutrition advice; however, individual calorie needs may vary.”
Menu Labeling Big Picture

- Mixed Results
- Restaurant reformulation
Strategic Science:
The Case of Smart Choices
Kellogg's Cocoa Krispies

Cocoa Krispies

Now helps support your child's immunity

25% Daily Value of Antioxidants & Nutrients

Vitamins A, C & E

Net Wt: 16.5 oz (1.1 lb 0.5 oz) (467 g)

Lays Baked!

Barbecue Flavored

Naturally Baked Potato Crisps

Baked!

Lays

100 calories per serving

8 servings per package

Coca-Cola

The real thing

No artificial flavors. No preservatives added. Since 1886.

100 calories per bottle

8 servings per package

Whole Grain Honey Nut Cheerios

Sweetened Whole Grain Oat Cereal with Real Honey and Almonds

Can help lower cholesterol & reduce the risk of heart disease

Can help lower cholesterol

100 calories per serving

110 calories per serving
SMART CHOICES PROGRAM™

Helping Guide Smart Food and Beverage Choices

The Smart Choices Program, a front-of-pack nutrition labeling program, is not currently conducting active operations pending the outcome of FDA’s front-of-package rulemaking process. For more information, view the program’s press release. The program was developed because of the need for a single front-of-pack nutrition labeling program that U.S. food manufacturers and retailers could voluntarily adopt to promote informed food choices and help consumers construct better diets.

The Smart Choices Program was created by a diverse group of scientists, academicians, health and research organizations, food and beverage manufacturers, and retailers. The group worked collaboratively to develop the program’s foundation, goals, and criteria using these guiding principles.

- Transparent – both the nutrition criteria and governing mechanism would be shared openly
- Coalition-based – scientists, academicians, nutrition educators, public health organizations, food manufacturers, retailers, and government observers came together to create the system
- Comprehensive – program applied to diet and health needs of the entire U.S. population
- Applied voluntarily – all food companies were encouraged to utilize this one system to reduce the clutter of multiple, individual company front-of-pack labeling systems previously on the market
- Flexible – the nutrient criteria were based on the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and were designed to be reviewed when the 2010 guidelines are released
What Were Some of the Smart Choices Products?
Letter to the Smart Choices Program

August 19, 2009
Sarah Krol
General Manager
Smart Choices Program

Dear Ms. Krol:

We are writing regarding your recent announcement that hundreds of products are beginning to appear in supermarkets with the new “Smart Choices” front-of-package (FOP) nutrition label.

It is our understanding that the Smart Choices program, the most recent voluntary FOP labeling program introduced in the United States, is administered by the American Society for Nutrition and NSF International. It consists of two FOP nutrition labeling elements. One is a green checkmark symbol indicating that a food bearing the checkmark has met certain nutrient criteria; the other states the number of calories per serving and the number of servings in the package. FDA and FSIS did not participate in the development of the program, although representatives of our agencies did observe the process by which Smart Choices was developed, and provided insights and data on research about nutrition labeling and its impact on consumers.

In the past five years, competing FOP symbols on food labels have proliferated. Consumer research suggests that these competing symbols, which are based on different nutrient criteria, are likely to confuse consumers. In this context, we recognize the potential value of a more standardized approach for FOP labeling. However, since products bearing the Smart Choices symbol are just beginning to appear in the market, we will need to monitor and evaluate the products as they appear and their effect on consumers’ food choices and perceptions. FDA and FSIS would be concerned if any FOP labeling systems used criteria that were not stringent enough to protect consumers against misleading claims; were inconsistent with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans; or had the effect of encouraging consumers to choose highly processed foods and refined grains instead of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains.
For Your Health, Froot Loops

By WILLIAM NEUMAN
Published: September 4, 2009

A new food-labeling campaign called Smart Choices, backed by most of the nation’s largest food manufacturers, is “designed to help shoppers easily identify smarter food and beverage choices.”

The green checkmark label that is starting to show up on store shelves will appear on hundreds of packages, including — to the surprise of many nutritionists — sugar-laden cereals like Cocoa Krispies and Froot Loops.
How Smart Were Smart Choices?

- Sampled from 8 packaged food categories on Smart Choices Website

- Retrieved nutrition info for 100 products

Roberto et al. Pub Health Nutr, 2011
Nutrient Profile Model (NPM)

• Score used to classify products as “healthy”

• Products **gain** points for **negative** nutrients:
  • Calories
  • Saturated fat
  • Sugar
  • Salt

• Products **lose** points for **positive** nutrients:
  • Fruit/Vegetables/Nuts
  • Fiber
  • Protein

• Validated & informed policy in UK & Australia

Rayner et al., 2005; Lobstein & Davies, Public Health Nutr 2009; Scarborough et al., Public Health Nutr 2007; Arambepola et al., Pub Health Nutr 2007
Results

64% of Smart Choices Products Did Not Meet NPM Standard for Healthy
How Would Smart Choices Impact Consumers?

• 216 adults recruited for consumer market cereal research
• Randomized to 3 different labels
• Conducted focus group
• Evaluated cereal
• Ate cereal with milk for breakfast
• Completed questionnaires
How Healthy Do You Think This Product Is?

No Label: 3.01
SC Serv/Pack: 3.83
SC 3/4 cup: 3.43

$d = .43, p = .024$
Results

• No differences in:

  – Taste

  – Purchase intent

  – Amount of sugar or vitamins
Estimated 120 Calories Per Serving

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% Correct</th>
<th>No Label</th>
<th>SC Serv/Pack</th>
<th>SC 3/4 cup</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>35</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$p = .001$
Cereal Poured (grams)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No Label</th>
<th>SC Serv/Pack</th>
<th>SC 3/4 cup</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grams</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$p = .803, \eta^2 = .002$
Cereal Eaten with milk (grams)

- No Label: 220 grams
- SC Serv/Pack: 219 grams
- SC 3/4 cup: 233 grams

$p = .468, \eta^2 = .007$
Results

- Smart Choices label increased perceptions of health for unhealthy cereal
- Improved calorie estimation accuracy
- Had no influence on behavior or purchase intentions
New Front-of-Package Labeling Initiative

Under the leadership of Commissioner of Food and Drugs Margaret Hamburg, M.D., reliable nutrition labeling of food products is a top priority for the Food and Drug Administration. In a statement issued October 2009, Dr. Hamburg encouraged food companies to review their labeling to ensure that they were in compliance with FDA regulations. In addition, FDA soon will propose guidance for the industry regarding nutrition labeling on the front of food packages, and plans to work collaboratively with the food industry to design and implement innovative approaches to front-of-package labeling that can help consumers choose healthy diets.

Continuing this initiative, Dr. Hamburg today issued an open letter to industry on the importance of accurate nutrition labeling of food products, and, the agency issued Warning Letters to 17 manufacturers informing the firms that the labeling for 22 of their food products violate provisions of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act that require labels to be truthful and not misleading.

"Today, ready access to reliable information about the calorie and nutrient content of food is even more important, given the prevalence of obesity and diet-related diseases in the United States," Dr. Hamburg said in the letter to industry. She also expressed her hope that the Warning Letters would clarify the FDA’s expectations for food manufacturers as they review their current labeling.

The violations cited in the Warning Letters include unauthorized health claims, unauthorized nutrient content claims, and the unauthorized use of terms such as “healthy,” and others that have strict, regulatory definitions. Companies that received Warning Letters have 15 business days to inform the FDA of the steps they will take to correct their labeling.
Connecticut to Scrutinize Food Labels

By WILLIAM NEUMAN
Published: October 14, 2009

Raising the stakes in the battle over nutritional claims for packaged foods, the Connecticut attorney general said on Wednesday that he was investigating a national labeling campaign that promotes products like Froot Loops and mayonnaise as nutritionally smart choices.

In letters to Kellogg’s, General Mills and PepsiCo, the attorney general, Richard Blumenthal, said he was concerned that the program, called Smart Choices, was “overly simplistic, inaccurate and
"Smart Choices" Food Labeling Program Halts Over FDA Concern

First Posted: 10-24-09 01:11 AM | Updated: 03-18-10 05:12 AM

WHAT'S YOUR REACTION?
Inspiring  Greedy  Typical  Scary  Outrageous  Amazing  Innovative  Infuriating

Read More: Fda, Food, Food Labeling, Food Labels, Kellogg's, Smart Choices, Business News

(AP) PORTLAND, Ore. - A food industry group is voluntarily halting promotion of its nutrition labeling program after federal regulators said such systems could mislead consumers, officials with the group said Friday.

Industry leaders launched the "Smart Choices" program in August to identify foods that meet certain nutritional standards and then highlight them for consumers with a green label on package fronts.

But the Food and Drug Administration said Tuesday that there are so many labeling programs with different criteria that they may mislead consumers about the health benefits of certain foods. The agency told manufacturers it will crack down on inaccurate labeling, although it did not name specific products or give a timeline for enforcement.
In the meantime...

- IOM Released First Report

- Working on Second Report

- Food industry releases Facts Up Front
Facts Up Front

PER SERVING

140 CALORIES
0 g SAT FAT 0% DV
240 mg SODIUM 10% DV
4 g SUGARS
5 g PROTEIN
40 IU VITAMIN D

10% DV
Red Means Stop

Greens Mean Go
4 Wholesome Grains and 9 essential vitamins and minerals
IOM Proposed Label

Need for Future Research
Strategic Science:

Using Food Marketing to Market Healthy Foods
Burger King asked: Which are your favorite toppings to double up on when having a BURGER KING® WHOPPER® sandwich your way?

- **Cheese**
- **Lettuce**
- **Tomato**
- **Onion**

Burger King:
How many cups of Seattle's Best Coffee© do you need in the morning to fully start your day? At participating restaurants.

**BURGER KING®**
Seattle's Best Coffee©
WHAT'S NEW

DESIGN THE CROWN CONTEST!
WIN A TRIP TO LEGOLAND®

The winner of the BK Crown™ Design the Crown Contest has been announced! Go to the gallery to see the winning design!

Sign up to start playing.
JOIN NOW!

LOGIN

Username

Password

forgot your password?

sign in

GET FUN ACTIVITIES

HELP BK GIVE BACK

PLAY NOW GIVE BACK TOYS PARENTS FOOD HELP
Character Licensing

$2088 million per year

FTC, 2008
Participants

- 40, 4 to 6-year-old preschoolers

Age 5.0 ± 0.7 yrs
65% Male

Race/Ethnicity
50% Caucasian
20% African American
13% Latino
18% Asian/Pacific Islander

Roberto et al. Pediatrics, 2010
Study Design

- Tasted 3 pairs of identical foods
  - Graham Crackers, Fruit Snacks, Carrots

- Package did or did not have character
Point to which one tastes better

Chose one for snack
Results Graham Crackers Taste Preference (%)

- No Character: 7.5%
- Same: 37.5%
- Character: 55%

$p < 0.001$
Graham Crackers Snack Choice (%)

- No Character: 12.5%
- Character: 88%

\( p < 0.001 \)
Gummy Fruits Snacks Taste Preference (%)

- No Character: 10%
- Same: 37.5%
- Character: 52.5%

$p < 0.001$
Gummy Fruits Snacks
Snack Choice (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>85</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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$p < 0.001$
Baby Carrots Taste Preference (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of Kids</th>
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<th>Same</th>
<th>Character</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>25</td>
<td>50</td>
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$p = 0.068$
Baby Carrots
Snack Choice (%)

Percentage of Kids

<table>
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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>27.5</td>
<td>73</td>
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</table>

$p = .004$
Replication in Guatemala

- Under & Over Nutrition

- Study Sample
  - N = 121 children
  - Age
    - Mean 7.4 ± 1.9 years
    - Range 4.3-11.5 years

- Characters:
Baby Carrots
Taste Preference (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Percentage of Kids</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Character</td>
<td>51</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

$p < .001$
Baby Carrots
Snack Choice (%)

Percentage of Kids

No Character
Character

40
60

p < .001
Should Characters Be Used to Promote Healthy Food?
Beloved Sesame Street Characters to Promote Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Consumption to Kids
Strategic Science: The NYC Sugary Drink Portion Cap Policy

New York Plans to Ban Sale of Big Sizes of Sugary Drinks

By MICHAEL W. GRYNSWALD
Published: May 30, 2012 | 1426 Comments

New York City plans to enact a far-reaching ban on the sale of large sodas and other sugary drinks at restaurants, movie theaters and street carts, in the most ambitious effort yet by the Bloomberg administration to combat rising obesity.

Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg on Wednesday with Linda L. Gibb, deputy mayor for health, as he discussed a plan to ban large sugary beverages. Next to each soda is the amount of sugar in it.

Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg on Wednesday with Linda L. Gibb, deputy mayor for health, as he discussed a plan to ban large sugary beverages. Next to each soda is the amount of sugar in it.
Sugary Drink Portion Cap

- No sugary drink containers > 16 oz in food service establishments
- Free refills permitted. Can buy as many containers as you like.
- Two lower courts ruled against the city
- Highest court agreed to hear the appeal
Research Aims

• Systematically identify policy frames:
  • “Pro” and “Anti” policy arguments
  • Who is making the arguments?
  • What communication strategies are used?
• Identify ideological vs. rationale arguments
• Inform future studies
The Importance of Framing

• Make parts of a message more salient

• Increase: \(^1\)
  – Perception
  – Understanding
  – Memory

• Framing influences public support \(^2\)

• Policies more likely to pass when support is high \(^3\)

\(^1\)Fiske, Taylor, 1991; \(^2\)Nelson et al., 1997; \(^3\)Jacobs et al., 2000; Stimson, 2004
The Battle Over the Frame
The Nanny
You only thought you lived in the land of the free.

Bye Bye Venti
Nanny Bloomberg has taken his strange obsession with what you eat one step further. He now wants to make it illegal to serve "sugary drinks" bigger than 16 oz. What's next? Limits on the width of a pizza slice, size of a hamburger or amount of cream cheese on your bagel?

New Yorkers need a Mayor, not a Nanny.
Find out more at ConsumerFreedom.com.
New Yorkers for Beverage Choices continues to reject the beverage ban in New York City! Join us.

Mayor Bloomberg and the Board of Health recently approved a ban on sales of sugar-sweetened beverages over 16 ounces in New York City. The sale of fountain and bottled beverages over 16 ounces will soon be prohibited in restaurants, movie theaters, sports venues, coffee shops, food trucks and street carts.

According to bureaucrats, New Yorkers need help deciding what size beverage is appropriate.
Content Analysis:

NYC Department of Health & Mental Hygiene
Public Testimony
Methods

Public Testimony
- 38,648 written submissions
- 411 unique written submission
- 50 spoken submissions
- American Beverage Association Testimony (65 pages)

Roberto et al., under review
Codebook Variables

• **Pro & Anti** Arguments across 9 themes
• 1 coder identified arguments
• 2 coders coded:
  – Pro or Anti policy
  – Argument Source
  – # times words: *Ban, Nanny, Exercise*
  – # Exclamation points
  – Capital Letters
  – Personal Anecdotes vs. Research
• 10% of testimony double coded
• Cohen’s kappa: .7 – 1.0
% Pro vs. Anti Policy

Pro 84%
Anti 16%

Gallup Poll June 2013: 69% Against
% Pro vs. Anti Policy
Unique Submissions

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<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Anti</th>
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<td>47%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>51%</td>
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<tr>
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<td>217</td>
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<td>234</td>
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Argument Sources - % Pro Policy

% Pro Policy

Medical/Health  US Citizens  Lawyers  No Author  Govt Official  Restaurant  Food Industry
# Communication Characteristics

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<th>Pro</th>
<th>Anti</th>
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<td>Research*</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>Argument</td>
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<tr>
<td>41%</td>
<td>Sugary drinks should be targeted</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>41%</td>
<td>Obesity is a major public health problem</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34%</td>
<td>Government has a responsibility to protect public health</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>28%</td>
<td>Portion sizes are too big/Need to reduce portion sizes</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Anti Arguments

54% Sugary drinks are not the right target for intervention

53% Concerns about freedom

31% Policy will not work to address obesity

30% Policy will hurt businesses
American Beverage Association Testimony
Most Common Anti Arguments

64 Sugary drinks are not the right target

58 The people were not given a vote/don’t want it

54 Policy will not work to address obesity

27 Concerns about freedom
Communication Mismatches
Sugary drinks are not the right target for intervention

Government vs. Personal responsibility

Policy will not work to address obesity

Policy will hurt businesses
Million Big Gulp March to protest proposed NYC soda ban

(CBS News) A group of angry citizens are scheduled to protest Mayor Michael Bloomberg's proposed soda ban on Monday.

NYC ban on big sodas could face legal test
Bloomberg soda ban: Board of Health eyes popcorn and milkshakes
Foes hit "Nanny" Bloomberg over sugary drink plan

At least 500 protesters are expected to take part at the "Million Big Gulp March" at City Park Hall starting at 4:30 p.m, according to NYC Liberty HQ spokesman Zach Huff. Working Family Party councilwoman Letitia James and city councilman and Republican nominee for the U.S. House of Representatives
Policy Will Hurt/Help Certain Groups?

David Jones, Community Service Society

Finally, the reason I decided to come here, I have been deeply offended by what the beverage industry has tried to do here. They have not admitted that the real factor here is economics. If you can sell liquids that have no nutritional value, that are sugar water, particularly targeted to adolescents who haven’t really matured to understand the long-term impacts. This is like found money. It is not quite as good as selling drugs, but pretty close. Then they have the sort of audacity to equate this whole process to what they describe as the Million Big Gulp March, an effort that was made to protect particularly black young people and black men. To suddenly make a sham of that, to equate civil rights and the struggle that is occurring in poor neighborhoods, particularly for the young, to this right to sell non-nutritional substances to young people is an outrage that has to be fought.
Strategic Science Opportunities

Policy Will Not Work to Address Obesity → Lab & Field Evaluations

Sugary drinks are not the right target → Links Btw Sugary Drinks & Poor Health

People Don’t Want It & Concerns About Freedom → Survey Data (e.g., portion sizes)
Conclusions

• Mismatch in the conversation
  – Arguments
  – Emotional vs. Rational
    • Anti more likely to use “ban”, “exercise” & emotion (capital letters)
    • Pro more likely to cite research

• Need for strategic research
  – Will it work?
  – Public opinion studies
  – Cost-effectiveness/impact on business
Strategic Science for Evidence-Based Food Policies
Acknowledgments

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Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
Health & Society Scholars
Healthy Eating Research
NIDDK
Rudd Foundation
Yale University

Yale University Rudd Center for Food Policy & Obesity

Psychology of Eating & Consumer Health Lab at Harvard

INCAP/CIIPEC Comprehensive Center for the Prevention of Chronic Diseases, Guatemala
The Psychology of Eating And Consumer Health Lab (PEACH)

The Psychology of Eating And Consumer Health (PEACH) lab at the Harvard School of Public Health studies public health policies intended to improve the world’s diet and prevent and reduce obesity and eating disorders. The goal of our research is to provide policymakers and institutions with science-based guidance. Our recent research has focused on menu labeling, front-of-package food labeling, food marketing, and New York City’s proposed portion cap on sugary drinks served in restaurants. The lab’s principal investigator is Christina Roberto, PhD.

About PEACH

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Latest Tweets

Yalies - I’m talking about The Power of Food Labels tomorrow (Sun) 10/19 at noon in the Farr room in Trumbull College for #Yale #FoodDay2013

Companies marketing fruits & veggies with junk food strategies: http://t.co/auj4cDYYoIG See our related research: http://t.co/eN6PHhN1gv

Highest NY State court will hear Bloomberg’s appeal for policy to limit portion sizes of sugary drinks: http://t.co/wBQcuA8vD