

Populism and public health

Countering popular perceptions that undermine the public's health.

RACP / AFPHM NZ

May 2019

I acknowledge and pay respect to Maori and Indigenous Peoples internationally noting the role they have played as custodians of the land.

Michael Moore AM

- Immediate Past President WFPHA
- Distinguished Fellow The George Institute
- Adj Professor University of Canberra
- Visiting Professor University of Technology Sydney
- mimomph@gmail.com

DR Margaret Chan Former Director-General WHO



“The challenges facing public health, and the broader world context in which we struggle, have become too numerous and too complex for a business-as-usual approach.”

Dr Margaret Chan Former Director General WHO

Where to from here?

The political dimension

Follow from Martin

- ▶ What do we mean by the “public’s health”?
- ▶ The drivers
 - ▶ The Nanny State and personal responsibility
 - ▶ Domination or Liberty
 - ▶ Political Donations
- ▶ Examples
 - ▶ Climate change
 - ▶ E-cigarettes
 - ▶ Sugar tax



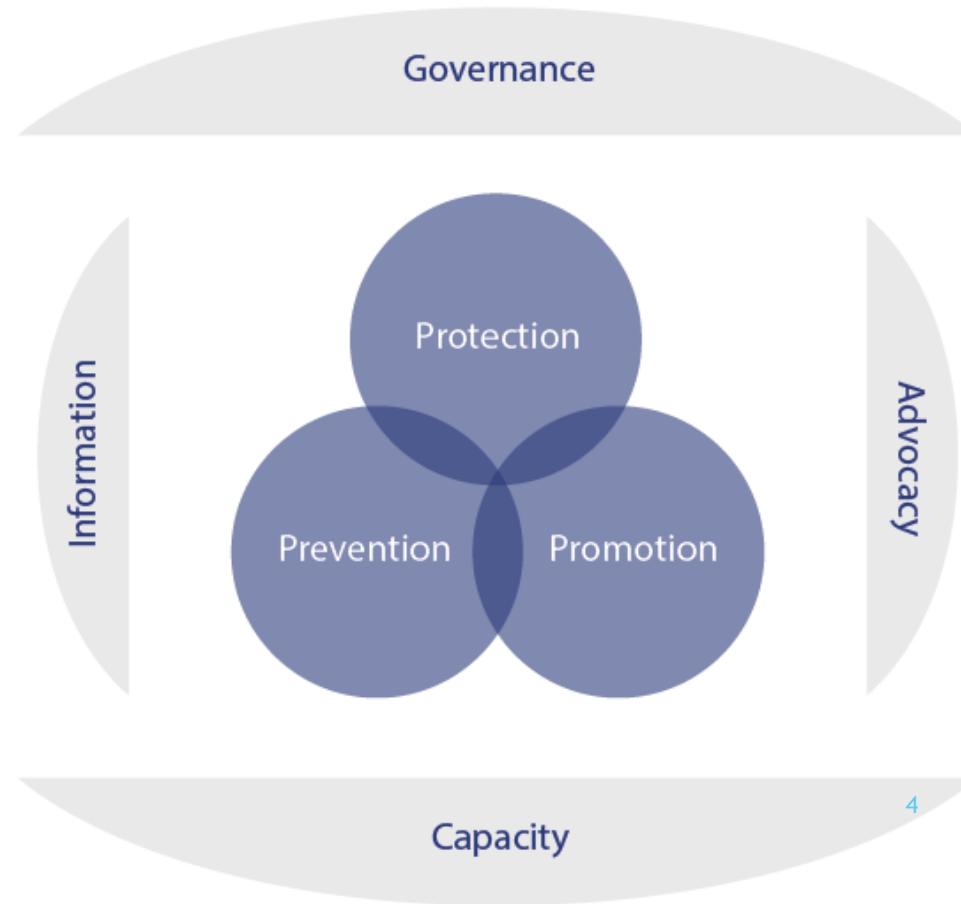
A Global Charter for the Public's Health

The World Federation of Public Health Associations

- A 'Horizontal' Approach in the Global Context
- Building from:
 - Declaration of Alma Ata (1978)
 - The Ottawa Charter (1986)
 - Millennium Development Goals

Seven areas of action

- Services
 - Protection
 - Prevention
 - Promotion
- Enablers/Functions
 - Governance
 - Information
 - Advocacy
 - Capacity



The Public Health Professional

- Firemen save lives
- Paramedics save lives
- Nurses save lives
- Doctors save lives
- Public Health Professionals save lives

A MILLION AT A TIME

The Science is not enough

- to challenge unhealthy populist sentiment

- ▶ Evidence plays a role
- ▶ The anecdote is often more powerful
- ▶ Evidence does provide credibility

- ▶ The challenge ...
 - ▶ Using the evidence base in a political manner
 - ▶ Evidence, anecdote, persistence

Motivators for traditional politicians

▶ Short term thinking - “only think to next election”

- ▶ Populist slogan

▶ Not true

- ▶ One of the factors

- ▶ Re-election critical for agenda

▶ Political structures

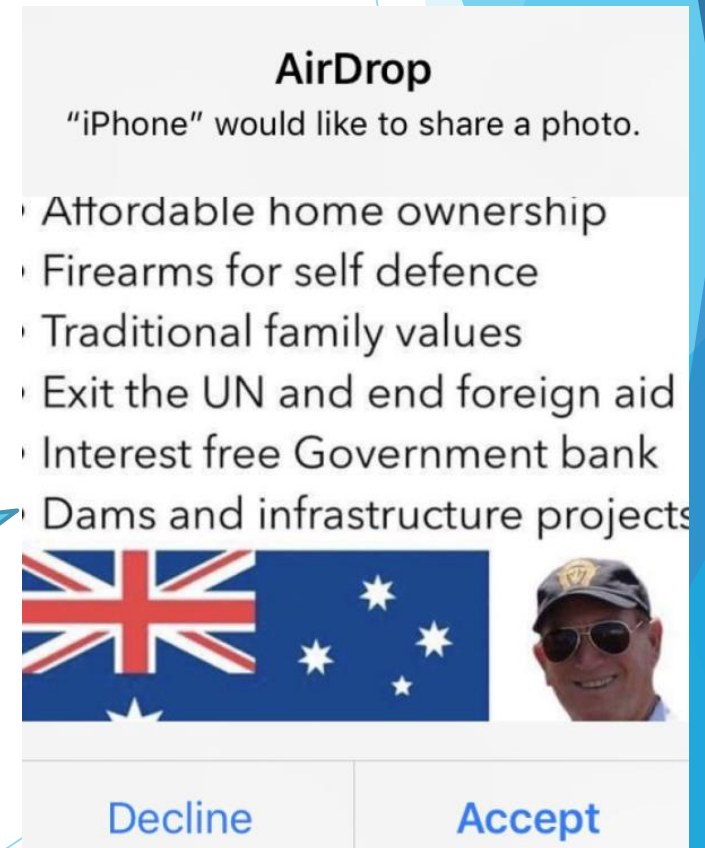
- ▶ Need for \$\$\$

- ▶ Donations

- ▶ Trust

“It kills the trust,
and you want
trust”

Dr Andrew Hughes ANU



ABC News 3/5/2019

Structural issues in Aust / NZ

- ▶ Dominance of the two parties
 - ▶ Being challenged
- ▶ Presidential style elections
- ▶ Trust
 - ▶ Behaviour of politicians
 - ▶ Small %
 - ▶ Desperation
 - ▶ Murdoch media
- ▶ Who sets the agenda?
 - ▶ What role \$\$\$\$?



Cathy McGowan AO
Independent MP



Dr Kerry Phelps
Independent MP

Dr Phelps:
“people wanted to
see politics done
differently”
ABC 5/4/2019

Breaking in:

- tapping into populist sentiment

- ▶ Mainstream media
- ▶ Social media
- ▶ Setting up front organisations
 - ▶ Just for support
 - ▶ Raising \$\$\$
- ▶ Using existing organisations
 - ▶ Taking over
 - ▶ Injecting policies

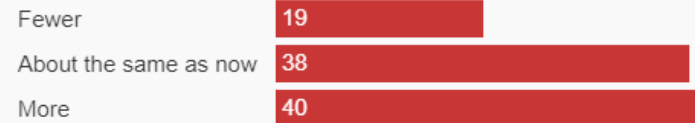
Left-leaning voters want more immigrants and right-leaning want fewer

Proportion of voter responses to the statement: "How many immigrants should Australia admit?"

Australian Greens



Australian Labor Party (ALP)



Liberal-National Coalition



Pauline Hanson's One Nation



Based on 301,013 respondents to Vote Compass between April 10 and April 22, 2019

[Get the data](#) - [Embed](#)

ABC "Vote Compass" 3/5/2019



The Nanny State

The Institute of Public Affairs – “non-interference”

“The Nanny State is obsessed with talking down (to) people. It tells them the views they hold and the way they live their lives are wrong”

Christian Kerr IPA

“It is the difference between a nanny-state 'government knows best' approach, compared with the personal dignity and control that comes from the freedom to make your own choices while taking responsibility for those choices.”

Hon Andrew Robb AO Trade Minister (when in opposition)

The term was made popular in 1968 in “The Spectator” by columnist “Quoodle”
(In reality Ian Macleod British Health Minister who in 1954 smoked through a press conference on smoking. He died at 57 of a heart attack.)

Daube, M Stafford, J & Bond, L [No need for nanny](#)

Priority for good government - ‘Nanny’ or ‘Good government stewardship’? *Interference or Domination?*

▶ Pettit

- ▶ “My aim in this book is to try to identify the main features of freedom as non-domination”
Republicanism: A theory of freedom and government

▶ Breakthrough in politics - what is a ‘liberal’?

▶ Domination: Who is the Nanny?

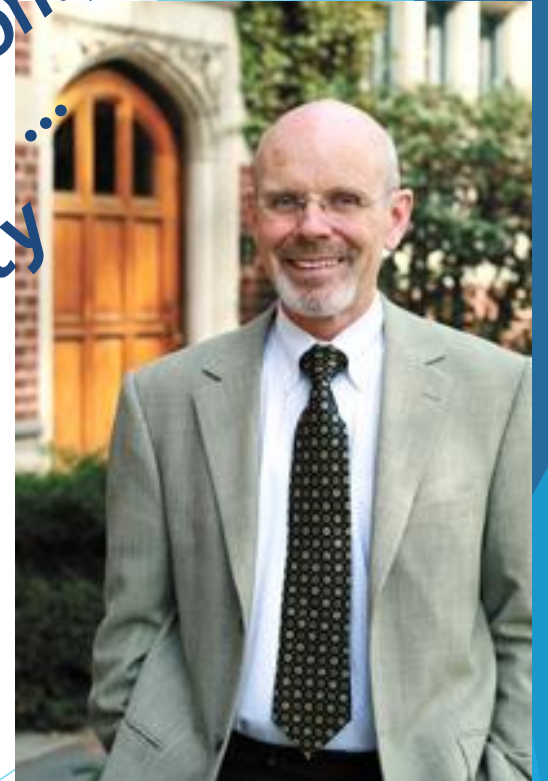
- ▶ Industry?
- ▶ Government?

▶ What is good government

▶ *the alternative?*

- ▶ “A fair go?” “A level playing field?”
- ▶ “Protection from domination” “Good stewardship?”

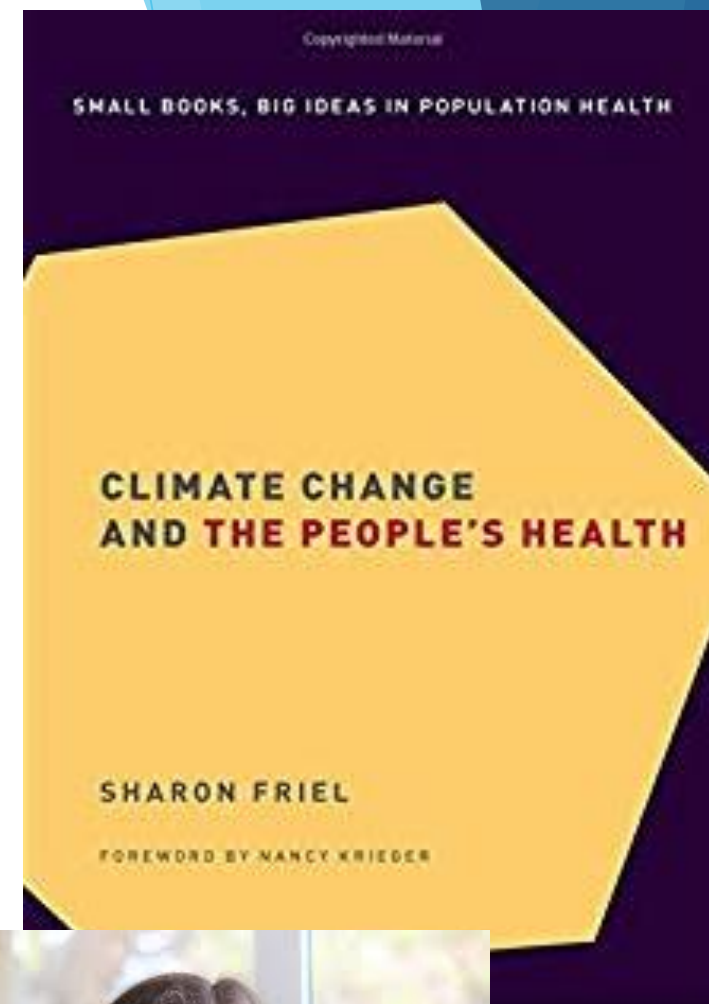
Therefore: Governments not only
have a mandate to regulate ...
- they have a responsibility



Pettit at Princeton
University

Climate Change and the “consumptagenic environment”.

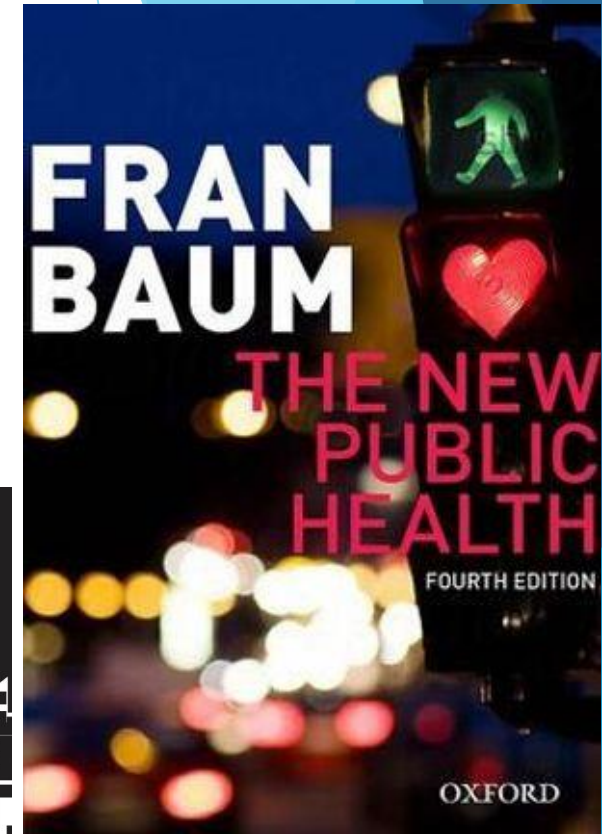
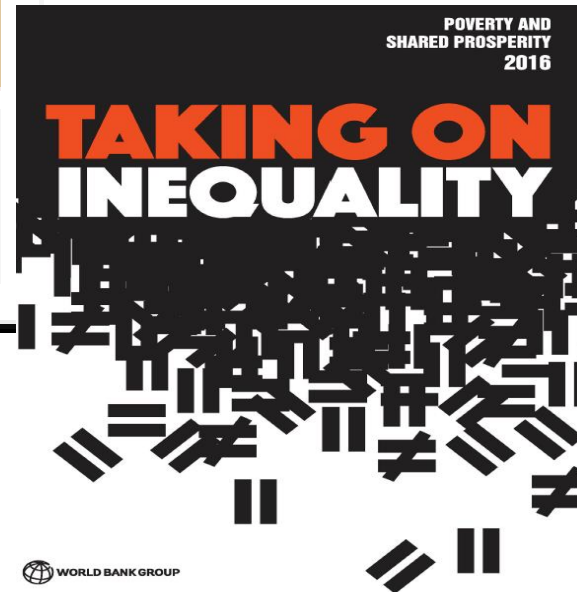
- ▶ Michael Marmot - “cause of the cause”
- ▶ Who wants to argue you should stop purchasing the latest phone?
- ▶ Evidence is clear .. enough
- ▶ Friel calls for a “systems approach”
 - ▶ Cross-disciplinary
 - ▶ Coordinated and ‘political’



Annual global temperatures from 1850-2018

Disruption is happening...

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



Putting the SDGs into Action - the Challenges of Global Health Leadership

HEALTH IN THE SDG ERA



WHO - presents SDG 3 at the centre of the Sustainable Development Goals

**BUT HOW
CAN I HAVE
INFLUENCE?**



Moore's ten steps for Advocacy

Building on Kotter's Change Management Theory

- Step 1: Establishing a Sense of Urgency**
- Step 2: Creating the Guiding Coalition**
- Step 3: Developing and Maintaining Influential Relationships**
- Step 4: Developing a Change Vision**
- Step 5: Communicating the Vision for Buy-in**
- Step 6: Empowering Broad-based Action**
- Step 7: Being Opportunistic**
- Step 8: Generating Short-term Wins**
- Step 9: Never Letting Up**
- Step 10: Incorporating Changes into the Culture**

Moore M, Yeatman H & Pollard C. (2013) *Evaluating success in public health advocacy strategies*
Vietnam Journal of Public Health, 1(1) 66-75
Available PHAA website under 'Take Action'



Change is not easy - lashing out at John Snow (not Game of Thrones)

- ▶ THE PUBLIC HEALTH AND NUISANCES REMOVAL BILL: DR. SNOW'S EVIDENCE
- ▶ *“It is the misfortune of Medicine, in its conflict with the prejudices of society, that it is continually exposed to discomfiture, through the perverse, crotchety, or treasonable behaviour of certain of its own disciples ... Society but wounds itself when it seeks to discredit the teachings of science, by setting against the comprehensive and well-weighed decisions of her true representatives, the crude opinions and hobbyistic dogmas of men whose perceptions are dimmed by the gloom of the den in which they think and move”.*

The Lancet, June 23, 1855

Lessons from eCigarette Policy

- ▶ The Tension
 - ▶ Treating the individual
 - ▶ Treating the population
- ▶ Harm Minimisation
 - ▶ Supply reduction
 - ▶ Demand reduction
 - ▶ Harm reduction
- ▶ The use of Twitter
 - ▶ Tobacco companies
 - ▶ Front organisations



Image of JUUL Wikipedia by Sept 8 2018 728% market share

Junk food - start with a sugar tax?





Boyd Swinburn @BoydSwinburn · 10h

My op-ed highlighting the speed of gun control to prevent another massacre vs the slowness to act on the health crisis of tobacco, alcohol and junk food: Health crisis - What will it take to break through?, via [@nzherald](#)



Boyd Swinburn: Health crisis - What will it take to break through?

Boyd Swinburn asks when the impetus behind gun control will apply to public health.

nzherald.co.nz



A sugar tax - on sugary soft drinks

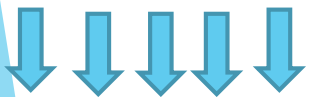
- ▶ Limit scope on sugar - achievable
- ▶ Opposition - forms their own “coalition of the willing”
 - ▶ Sugar farmers
 - ▶ Sugar industry
 - ▶ Food and Grocery Council
 - ▶ Institute of Public Administration
- ▶ Techniques
 - ▶ From tobacco industry rule book
 - ▶ Deny, deny, deny
 - ▶ Build relationships

Using social media - PHAA for election 2019

New Zealand

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Australia



Australia has one of the **LOWEST LEVELS OF PREVENTIVE HEALTH INVESTMENT**. Australia's rate is a meagre 1.8%.

Source: Data on OECD nation preventative health expenditure from stats.oecd.org, Nov 2018

Learn more ...

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Thanks for
the
opportunity