

# Science, Precaution, Innovation: Glyphosate Herbicides, Harmful Pharmaceuticals, Infant Vaccines, GM Technology...

Learn Tragically 'Late Lessons from Early Warnings'

By [Chemical Concern](#)

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*Glyphosate herbicides, harmful pharmaceuticals, infected blood transfusions, mercury preservative in infant vaccines, organophosphate insecticides, GM technology and fluoridation of the water supply . . . the damage to human and environmental health has been incalculable.*

As [Professor Jacqueline McGlade](#), Chief Scientist and Director of the Division of Early Warning and Assessment of the United Nations Environment Programme, said in her preface to [Late lessons from early warnings: science, precaution, innovation](#):

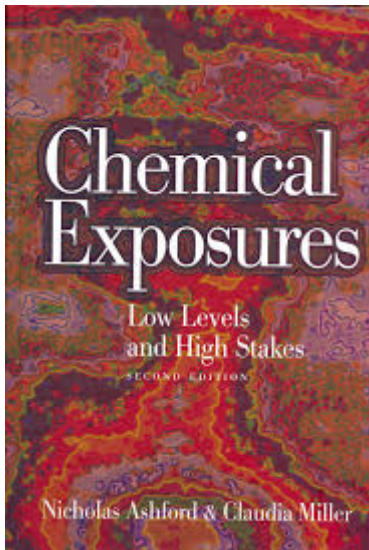


There is something profoundly wrong with the way we are living today. There are corrosive pathologies of inequality all around us — be they access to a safe environment, healthcare, education or clean water. These are reinforced by short-term political actions and a socially divisive language based on the adulation of wealth . . .

One thing that has become clearer over the past decade is that certain chemical substances are highly stable in nature and can have long-lasting and wide ranging effects before being broken down into a harmless form. The risk of a stable compound is that it can be bio-accumulated in fatty tissues at concentrations many times higher than in the surrounding environment . . . So exposure to toxic chemicals and certain foodstuffs are at risk of causing harm, especially to vulnerable groups such as foetuses in the womb or during childhood when the endocrine system is being actively built. Even with small dose exposures, the consequences can in some instances be devastating with

problems ranging from cancer, serious impacts on human development, chronic diseases and learning disabilities.

Professor McGlade points out that well-informed individuals and communities would ‘more properly’ set ‘the power to act’, than current political systems which have become ‘silted up by vested interests and a determination to protect assets’ – and, we would add, to accumulate profits. She calls for “a more ethical form of public decision-making based on a language in which our moral instincts and concerns can be better expressed . . .”



Above, a book by [Claudia Miller](#), M.D., M.S., a tenured Professor in Environmental and Occupational Medicine and Vice Chair of the Department of Family and Community Medicine of the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio (UTHSCSA), who has written extensively on the health effects of low-level chemical exposures.

One simple measure could be adopted. Every scientific report or review should be prefaced by a declaration of the researcher’s competing financial interests

From the [Nature/ British Dental Journal’s declaration](#) of the authors’ competing financial interests [Critique of the review of ‘Water fluoridation for the prevention of dental caries’ published by the Cochrane Collaboration in 2015](#), we learn that – out of 17 – these authors had such an interest – see footnote, with names added to the initials in the list.

The Cochrane review noted- amongst many other findings – that only two studies since 1975 have looked at the effectiveness of reducing cavities in baby teeth, and found fluoridation to have no statistically significant impact – and within the ‘before and after’ studies none showed the benefits of fluoridated water for adults.

In view of the authors’ competing interests it is not surprising that they cast doubt on the validity of [the unfavourable findings](#) of [the Cochrane Review](#), which is ‘unconstrained by commercial and financial interests’.

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Notes:

1. A. J. Rugg-Gunn: AJRG was a member of the MRC (UK) working group on water

fluoridation and health and is a trustee of [The Borrow Foundation](#) (long associated with milk fluoridation).

2. A.J. Spencer: AJS is a member of the Australian Government Department of Health, Nutritional Reference Values Fluoride Expert Working Group and the National Health and Medical Research Council Fluoride Reference Group.
3. H.P. Whelton: HPW is Principal Investigator of the FACCT study funded by the Irish Health Research Board and is an evaluation of the impact of changes in the policy on children's oral health in Ireland. She is an independent advisor to the British Fluoridation Society.
4. C.Jones: CJ is a member of the British Fluoridation Society, the Cochrane Oral Health Group and commented on the Cochrane review protocol.
5. J. F. Beal: JFB is vice-chairman, British Fluoridation Society.
6. P.Castle: PC is a communications adviser to the National Alliance for Equity in Dental Health and the British Fluoridation Society.
7. P.V. Cooney: PVC was Chief Dental Officer for Canada.
8. J. Johnson: JJ is President, American Fluoridation Society.
9. M.P. Kelly: MPK is co-investigator on the CATFISH study of a water fluoridation scheme in Cumbria.
10. M.A. Lennon: MAL was a member of the Advisory Panel for the York Review, a member of the MRC Expert Group and formerly Chair of the British Fluoridation Society.
11. J. McGinley: JMcG is manager, Fluoridation Activities, American Dental Association.
12. D. O'Mullane: DO'M is a member of the Irish Expert Body on Fluorides and Health.
13. P.P. Sharma: PPS is the President, Ontario Association of Public Health Dentistry.
14. W.M. Thomson: WMT was a member of the panel which produced the Royal Society of New Zealand report on community water fluoridation.
15. S. M. Woodward: SMW works for The Borrow Foundation.
16. S.P. Zusman: SPZ is Chief Dental Officer with Israeli Ministry of Health.

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