

Editor's Choice

A tale of two vaccines

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Making Science Obsolete

Rajagopal's suggestion that it's "incumbent on journals to indicate on the web pages when an article has been rendered obsolete by new data" is novel and revolutionary.

There is then no need for meta-analysis and complicated statistics. "This paper is more recent than that; so that one is now obsolete" is the simple logic that can be easily understood by the 'masses'. I wonder if he thought this up himself or if this is now the stance of the WHO

The WHO recently published "Best practice guidance // How to respond to vocal vaccine deniers in public" (1). It is suggested that speakers, condense their main message into a simple, easily understood "sound bite" – that is, a less than 30 second message that captures your point in a riveting fashion.

This is old hat. In 1928 Edward Bernays used these techniques to promote the tobacco industry. In his book 'Propaganda' he describes the techniques of public communication for 'conscious and intelligent manipulation of the organized habits and opinions of the masses' (2).

It is sad that science is now reduced to spectacle.

Debate is replaced by one-way 'information, education and communication' (IEC) sessions.

The population is reduced to a binary: the rational scientific person and the anti-vaxxers.

References

1. http://www.euro.who.int/_data/assets/pdf_file/0005/315761/Best-practice...
2. Bernays, Edward L. Propaganda. Port Washington, NY: Kennikat Press. [1928] 1972. ISBN 080461511X

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