

**Show Transcript
Deconstructing Dinner
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Transcript: Christine Nguyen**

Jon Steinman: And welcome to Deconstructing Dinner, a syndicated weekly radio show and podcast produced at Kootenay Co-op Radio CJLY, in Nelson British Columbia and rebroadcast on over 48 stations throughout North America including Vancouver's CFRO 102.7FM and CJSF 90.1FM. I'm Jon Steinman.

A little less than four years ago, Deconstructing Dinner aired a one-hour feature titled "A Dinner Date With the Olympics." The episode was produced alongside the 2006 Winter Olympics in Turin and it addressed among other things, two of the Games major sponsors. Certainly when we think of the Olympic Games, the athletes, the events, we think of human beings at the peak of performance, in optimal physical and psychological states, and well, sports *do* tend to evoke images of health. And so when two of the Games' major sponsors are Coca-Cola and McDonald's (perhaps the two most targeted food companies in the world for their *unhealthy* food and their environmental, social and animal welfare practices), it sparked us then in 2006 to *deconstruct* this seeming hypocrisy. On today's show we'll revisit with that episode, adding of course some more recent updates, because much of the content shared four years ago on the subject has not changed at all today – here in 2010.

The voices heard on that broadcast were those of Jennifer Gibson – a former Sport Dietitian with the Vancouver-based SportMedBC, and we will also hear from Warren Nightingale – the-then Education Content Developer for the Ottawa-based Media Awareness Network.

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Before we jump into to today's broadcast I do have an important heads-up to share and it relates to a broadcast that we aired back on July 2nd 2009 titled, "The Future of Prison Farms." That one-hour feature spent considerable attention on the now in-process closures of Canada's six prison farms operating across the country. The issue has become a rallying cry for farmers, eaters, prison workers and prisoners alike who recognize the farms as a critical piece to not only the food supply of the prison's themselves, but as an important contributor to our food system as a whole. In particular what has infuriated many have been the

comments made by Conservative Party members of parliament and ministers who have shared some rather shocking remarks about farming in general. Perhaps the most controversial were the comments made by the then Minister of Public Safety Peter Van Loan who insisted that, "labour-intensive farming is no longer relevant." Van Loan and his office have further insisted that capital-intensive farming is the future of farming and the prison farms as they operate today, are therefore no longer relevant to Canadians. Of course we live in an age where capital intensive farming has been accompanied by a myriad of threats and negative impacts and supporters of the prison farm program continue to fight to not only preserve the program but to enhance it and make it even better. And so on Monday, February 1st (mark your calendars) Deconstructing Dinner is happy to announce that we'll be a media partner in an event that will take place in the political riding of the recently appointed Minister of Public Safety Vic Toews. The event will be an all-party panel to discuss the ongoing closure of the farms and Deconstructing Dinner will help facilitate a live on-line video webcast so Canadians from coast to coast to coast can view the event and even take part by posing questions to the panelists. Confirmed to attend will be the NDP's Rural and Community Development Critic Niki Ashton, Liberal Agriculture Critic Wayne Easter, Liberal Public Safety Critic Mark Holland, Green Party of Canada candidate Kate Storey and Minister Toews has received an invite but he is not yet confirmed. Again that's Monday, February 1st between 1:30-3:30pm CST, that's 4:00-6:00pm Newfoundland Standard Time, 3:30-5:30pm Atlantic Standard Time, 12:30-2:30pm Mountain Standard Time, and 11:30-1:30pm Pacific Standard Time. Again, February 1st.

For those who live near Minister Toews riding, the event will be hosted in Steinbach Manitoba at the Mennonite Heritage Village. You can stay posted to the Deconstructing Dinner website and the show for more information on how you can tune in live over the web and take part in the event and in the meantime you can visit our website for more information and also check out our July 2nd, 2009 episode about the issue archived at deconstructingdinner.ca

increase music and fade out

Jon Steinman: There's no question that the Olympic Games would have difficulty existing without the assistance of corporate sponsors. According to the International Olympic Committee (the IOC), commercial partnerships are the "driving force behind the promotion, financial security and stability of the Olympic Movement." In fact 44% of revenues generated *by* the Olympic Games *come from* sponsors – most notably the Olympics' "TOP Partners." This category of sponsoring grants the corporation *exclusive* global marketing rights within their designated product category. The TOP programme is based on a structure requiring a minimum of four years commitment and these sponsors are then able to develop marketing programmes with members of the Olympic movement, including the IOC, the National Olympic Committees and the Organizing Committees. According to the IOC, TOP programme partners receive the use of

all Olympic imagery, hospitality opportunities at the Games, direct advertising and promotional opportunities including preferential access to broadcast advertising, and on-site concessions/franchise and product sales and showcase opportunities among other benefits. Of the nine companies who are TOP partners for the current four-year cycle, we find weapons manufacturer GE and credit card company VISA among others, and of those *others*, we come to the *two* companies of focus today, McDonald's and Coca-Cola. It's likely the influence of these two companies that led to what the UK's Sunday Times reported in 2004 following the Olympic Games in Athens, where strict regulations dictated that spectators *may* be refused admission to events if they are carrying food or drinks made by companies that did *not* see fit to sponsor the games. So in other words these companies maintained some considerable control over what goes on at the Games.

This policy is referred to on the official Olympic website in that the IOC aims to, "spread the message of Brand Protection and safeguard its partners, preserving their rights and the integrity of the Olympic Image."

soundbite

The history of McDonald's and the Olympics dates back to 1968, where according to the company they airlifted hamburgers to athletes competing in Grenoble, France. Their *official* sponsorship began at the 1976 Games in Montreal, and between 1988 and 1994, McDonald's was the sponsor of National Olympic Committees in several countries around the world. The company has been a *worldwide* sponsor and part of this TOP programme spoken of just earlier since 1996.

Now despite the widespread criticism of the health of McDonald's food and its environmental, social and animal welfare practices, many athletes have placed themselves beside the golden arches as officially sponsored athletes by the company.

Audio Clip – McDonald's Advert: Brad Martin: When I served fries at McDonald's I always had to deal with temptation. Now? I give into it every chance I get. To me, that's gold. To you? (sounds of a crowd cheering followed by the McDonald's jingle).

JS: That's Ancaster, Ontario's Brad Martin – a snowboarder competing for Team Canada at this year's Olympic Games. Brad Martin is one of a number of athletes that McDonald's is sponsoring this year, including *former* women's ice hockey Olympian Cassie Campbell.

Audio Clip – McDonald's Advert: Cassie Campbell: After morning practice, I love to go for breakfast at McDonald's with my biggest fans – my parents. To me?

That's golden. You? (sounds of a crowd cheering, followed by McDonald's jingle).

JS: Along with Cassie Campbell, McDonald's Canada is also sponsoring snowboarder Crispin Lipscomb, figure skater Patrick Chan, and speed-skater Cindy Klassen. Even athletic icons like Wayne Gretzky, have in the past lent their image alongside that of a Big Mac and this year Montreal's freestyle skier Alexandre Bilodeau appears to be the Big Mac's official spokesperson.

Audio Clip – McDonald's Advert: Alexandre Bilodeau: I've always been a Big Mac guy. Hey, I love the classics. But for some reason, I'm more comfortable eating it upside-down. To me? That's golden. You? (sounds of a crowd cheering, followed by McDonald's jingle).

JS: Now the idea of seeing Wayne Gretzky or Alexandre Bilodeau sitting in a McDonald's wolfing down a Big Mac and washing it down with a Large Coke and fries is not quite the image of high-performance athletes and optimal health that the Olympic games promotes.

In 2006 when we first explored McDonald's Olympic sponsorship, company was offering what it called the "Gold Medal Meal." Now this meal is *not* what one would expect given the name. In fact the Gold Medal Meal, was simply a Big Mac, Fries and a Soft Drink. When we first researched the nutritional composition of the meal using McDonald's on-line nutrition calculator, the calculator itself was oddly broken. After we added the *individual* items to the nutritional calculator tool, the *total* nutritional values were actually incorrect, with the totals yielding *less* than what the *actual* total should have been. Sure enough, almost 4 years later, their calculator is *still* broken. After we added a Big Mac, Large Fries and a Large Coke to the calculator – the total calories of the meal according to the calculator was 1,410 calories, but when *manually* adding the individual items together, the total comes to 1,420 calories. Now nevertheless, the Gold Medal Meal yields 1,420 Calories and 56g of Fat (which is 87% of the recommended daily value.)

So with McDonald's and the Olympics being a somewhat synonymous as we head into the 2010 Olympics, how *does* the Big Mac meal stack up for an athlete? Is this an optimal meal for Canadian athletes Alexandre Bilodeau or Cindy Klassen? Well helping shed some light on the topic for our 2006 episode was Jennifer Gibson who was then with SportMedBC.

SportMedBC is a not-for-profit society, whose focal point is sport medicine and science within the British Columbia provincial sport system. Jennifer is a Registered Dietitian, and I asked her whether the Big Mac Meal is an ideal choice for an Olympic athlete.

Jennifer Gibson: The gold medal meal is not something that I would specifically recommend for any seriously high-performing athlete in a pre-competitive state. I

think it's pretty obvious that the Big Mac combo is pretty high in calories and fat, and overall not a really well-balanced meal. I think if you compare it to Canada's Food Guide, for example, you're missing fruits and vegetables, and dairy and calcium sources and those foods contain both building and illness-fighting kind of vitamins and minerals that athletes definitely need. Usually pre-competition foods about 3-4 hours before consist of a mixed meal that would be 3-4 food groups that tend to be high complex carbs, lean protein and low in fat. And I think that in the case of the gold medal meal if the athlete maybe wiped off the special sauce and had a water instead of coke, they could probably take away about 500 calories. If they chose a salad instead of fries they could probably knock off another 500 calories as well.

JS: Jennifer Gibson went on to add that Canadians would likely not be naïve enough to believe that a Big Mac Meal is ideal for an Olympic athlete. But McDonald's does not seem to share that same position. Shortly before the Olympic Games in Athens in 2004, the International Olympic Committee and McDonald's launched the Go Active website – designed to encourage active living. On the website was a page devoted *to* the Olympics, and it mentioned the many athletes that the company would be “serving” in Turin. McDonald's went on to say that “the athletes' favourite foods consist of Big Macs, French Fries, Egg McMuffins and Chicken McNuggets.”

soundbite

JS: Now of course Big Macs, French Fries and soft drinks, are only *some* of the items offered at McDonalds, and the company has for many years sought to offer “*healthier*” alternatives to the standard McDonald's fare, alternatives that athletes might be more inclined to purchase.

As I continued my conversation with Jennifer Gibson – who at the time was with SportMedBC, we spoke of these alternatives such as salads, which are often *perceived* as an ideal alternative. But when we look more closely at the *nutritional* values of the salad options, in many cases, these values are not much different than the standard Big Mac or Quarter Pounder.

Jennifer Gibson: I think that in many cases the culprit is what is going *on* the salad so for example with the bacon ranch salad with warm crispy chicken from McDonald's, the dressing in and of itself is adding quite a substantial portion of the fat to the product. I wouldn't recommend just a salad alone to an athlete, just because it's very low in carbohydrates and high in fat and carbohydrates being the body's fuel and energy source are really critical for the performance. So they could use this salad as a base and I would probably recommend that he or she, the athlete, would skip the bacon bits, ask for lower fat dressing and then go and try to add two, maybe, multigrain rolls to make it a balanced meal. So again it can work, it's just being able to have the education to the athlete and kind of guiding them around ways to make it a healthier choice for them.

JS: This is Deconstructing Dinner. On today's episode we're revisiting with our 2006 broadcast titled "A Dinner Date with the Olympics." As we approach the 2010 Winter Games in Vancouver, we're once again taking a closer and updated look at two of the games major sponsors: McDonald's and Coca-Cola. With the two companies often representing the polar opposites to the physical activity and healthy living that the Games represents, we're spending this hour deconstructing the marketing messages coming out of this corporate relationship between these companies and the Olympic Games.

While McDonald's insists, as mentioned earlier, that athletes' favourite items are Big Macs and French Fries among other foods, Sport Dietitian Jennifer Gibson does not advise on such options for athletes. And so when we first spoke with Jennifer in early 2006 leading up to the Winter Games in Turin, we chose to follow up on McDonald's assertion that athletes were nevertheless eating these foods. In 2006 the company announced that they would, "feed more than 15,000 athletes, coaches, officials and media from around the world at their two official Olympic restaurant sites." This year, in 2010, the same message, instead, this year there will be three restaurants set up on-site. To find out what the athletes were eating back in 2006 in Turin, we took advantage of the company's offer to communicate with the staff themselves who were working at those restaurants. McDonald's had set up the Olympic Champion Crew Blog, a website that allowed anyone around the world to communicate with employees of McDonald's working at the Games and so Deconstructing Dinner went on-line and typed in a question for the staff members working there, and it read this, "What are some of the favourite items that athletes are ordering at the Olympics?"

Now as was the case, all messages posted to the blog needed to first go through a moderator – someone to skim through the question and approve it to be posted. And in no less than 5 minutes after we sent the question, a posting appeared on the site, but the *wording* of our question had changed. It appears the company was nervous to have such a question asked, and instead the question was changed to "what seemed to be the favourite items purchased?" Any reference to our original question of "what *athletes* were eating," was removed!

soundbite

JS: McDonald's Gold Medal Meal was offered at their Canadian restaurants leading up to and throughout the 2006 Olympic Games in Turin, Italy. And while this year the Gold Medal Meal promotion is not being used, McDonald's has nevertheless launched "featured foods" of the Olympic Games. Those foods include a Parmigiana Chicken Snack Wrap, S'Mores Pie, and a Crème Brulee Crunch McFlurry. Checking in on the ingredients of this 650 calorie McFlurry are modified milk ingredients, sugar, glucose, soy mono and diglycerides, guar gum, dextrose, artificial vanilla flavour, carrageenan, cellulose gum and perhaps the

most obscure.... dimethylpolysiloxane (or PDMS) which is part of a group of compounds more commonly known as silicones. PDMS is found in contact lenses, medical devices, shampoos, caulking, lubricating oils, aquarium sealants and heat-resistant tiles. It also makes up 4% of the composition of silly putty. The ingredient is ranked by the Science Channel as one of the Top 10 Weirdest Food Ingredients. There is no indication of the ingredient's possible benefits or concerns posed to athletes.

soundbite

JS: Now the other major food and beverage sponsor of the Olympic Games is Coca-Cola. The history of Coca Cola and the Olympics dates back even further than McDonald's to 1928. Now in 2010, Canadians have likely become quite familiar with the company's sponsorship of one of the signature Olympic events – the cross-country torch relay. Coca-Cola has sponsored the relay since 1996 and any Canadians viewing the event have already likely seen the large Coca-Cola truck accompanying the runners while Coca-Cola employees hand out cans of Coca-Cola to street-side fans.

And similar to the McDonald's Olympic relationship, here again is a rather startling image - seeing people running alongside the red and white Coca-Cola logo and promoting an athletic event. When we first aired this episode back in 2006, the juxtaposition was likely even more startling for residents near Turin where food and beverage seem to maintain a much more *important* cultural role than here in North America. In fact, the very home of the now-worldwide slow-food movement originated just south of Turin in the town of Bra, and as was the case, the Coca-Cola Olympic Torch relay did not even make it into Turin without running into a few protests. In the town of Exilles for example, Coca-Cola along with local law enforcement decided that it would be safer to *not* accompany the torch until later that evening because of the intense protests planned there. Even a small neighbourhood association in Rome vowed it would block passage of the Olympic torch because the relay was sponsored by Coca-Cola. And in another instance was Italian runner Elenora Belanda who was working her way through the northern Italian city of Trent, when she encountered eight protesters who grabbed the torch and ran off. A total of 33 similar incidents accompanied the torch between Rome and Turin.

Even more illustrative of the anger that some Italians have towards Coca Cola comes from the Mayor of the town of Bussoleno – 50km west of Turin who banned any Coca-Cola advertisements throughout the community as he saw the company as a threat to the culture of the Susa Valley where the town is located.

But most interesting was the November 2005 announcement by the Turin city-council who voted to ban Coca-Cola products from its offices to protest alleged abuse of workers by the company in Latin America. The mayor, however, did *not* allow the enforcement of this ban.

Fast-forwarding to today, 2010, there is continued opposition to the Olympic Games here in Canada, with some of the most vocal opposition being directed towards Canada and British Columbia's significant financial investment into the games *despite* the widespread poverty and homelessness throughout the province. But also on the radar is opposition to the Olympics being held on unceded indigenous lands. It was after all in 1876 when the federal government passed the Indian Act thereby imposing control over *all* indigenous people and lands. This illegal occupation continues today in a country where Indigenous peoples in Canada suffer from the highest rates of unemployment, poverty, homelessness, suicide, violent death, drug and alcohol addiction, imprisonment, HIV, cancer, diabetes and tuberculosis. Many Indigenous communities face ongoing resource exploitation that destroys their local environments such as that from mining, oil and gas, resort development and logging.

As a result, 50% of all indigenous peoples in what is now called Canada are located in urban areas where in cities like Vancouver, they represent 32% of the homeless and where 45% of homeless women are native and 40% of street youth are, too, native.

The slogan "No Olympics on Stolen Native Land" has been repeated across the country, sometimes with protests coinciding with the torch relay, and listeners of Deconstructing Dinner might recall the voice of Nicole Manuel of the Neskonlith Indian band located near Chase, British Columbia. Nicole is of the Secwepemc people and she spoke in late 2006 at a food security event held in Vancouver. Here's a clip from that speech.

Nicole Manuel: Assimilation – it's the psychological attack on our belief system. This is very important when we talk about food sovereignty because this belief system encompasses all the natural beings and what everyone considers animate or inanimate objects are things that all have a spirit and that's what we believe. Our food has a spirit. Don talked about the conference and I thought I was the only one when I need to berry pick, every year I have to berry pick – if I don't, I'll go crazy, I'll go mental and this is not a lie! And I realized, other women experience the same thing, that emotion, it's a spiritual connection. Some people might call it zen or chi, or whatever you call it but it's a spiritual connection to us, to our food systems. And the same goes with the hunters that provide food for our families and the fishermen that provide fish for our families. It's that spiritual connection that's deeper than I could explain in English. It would be really hard, but it's there – and we're connected to our food in a deep, deep way. Over six years ago to this day, to this very day, Secwepemc gathered at a place called Skwelkwek'welt; the white man calls it Sun Peaks. It's a ski resort in our backyard, in our territory. There must have been almost 100 Secwepemc there, and when people start standing up and speaking about the land there, they start speaking about the hunting, how bountiful it was, how the fish were in the lakes and creeks. The berries, the roots, all along the valley bottom of Skwelkwek'welt.

There was Indian potatoes, they were big like potatoes. That was the staple of our diet. The elders, they spoke about running along the valleys there and they'd feel lumps at the bottom of their feet. Those were the Indian potatoes. They don't grow there anymore. Right now there's a day lodge – a village day lodge. There's a Delta hotel. Nancy Greene's Cahilty Lodge. But no more Indian potato. And that hurts all of us, and when we heard those stories about our food, us women and even men cried for what that Japanese company, Nippon Cable, is doing to destroy our lands. But it was that, talking about our food and our connection to our food that caused us to take action. So far there's been over 50 arrests of food gatherers, medicine gatherers, hunters. Our homes have been destroyed and we've actually been banned from occupying lands that we've always occupied. Like I said, we're not colonized people, we still practice our food gathering, our people still hunt. You go into my uncle's freezer, you don't see beef and chicken in that freezer. It's a deep freezer full of salmon: wild salmon, wild deer meat and moose meat. Without that his grandchildren will go hungry; that's what they live on. Most of our food comes from the mountains and these mountains are at the threat of destruction by the ski resort industry and you heard mentioned earlier, the 2010 Olympics. Those mountains that are untouched, that are now staked for ski resort development because of the 2010 Olympics. I'm not in support of that.

JS: Nicole Manuel of the Secwepemc people speaking in late 2006 in Vancouver. Four years prior to that recording, representatives of the Stat-lee-um people and the Secwepemc made an official submission to the International Olympic Committee outlining the human rights abuses occurring in Canada and within their territories – and in particular the development of ski resorts on their land. They requested that the IOC *not* award the 2010 bid to Vancouver/Whistler. And then, in March 2003, an elder and a youth of the Secwepemc traveled to Olympic headquarters in Switzerland and made a formal presentation requesting once again, that the bid not be awarded to Vancouver/Whistler. Fast-forward to November 2007, the Austrian Ski Team arrived at Sun Peaks resort for training as part of their 2010 preparations. Members of the Secwepemc protested their arrival.

And so where does Coca-Cola – one of the major Olympic sponsors - come into the picture? Well despite the opposition among some indigenous peoples to the Olympic Games, Coca-Cola launched the aboriginal art bottle program leading up to the 2010 Games. Aboriginal artists have been commissioned to design life-size Coca-Cola bottles using their traditional art-forms. The bottles will be on display at the Games.

And then there is of course diabetes – which prior to the arrival of the Western diet, was non-existent among aboriginal communities. Today, aboriginal peoples are 3-5 times more likely to experience type-2 diabetes than non-aboriginal Canadians. And while no one company can be blamed for their contributing role in these horrible circumstances, certainly Coca-Cola and McDonald's are the mascots of the highly processed, fat and sugar laden western diet. Even the

Government of Canada recommends to aboriginal peoples to “limit” their consumption of fried foods like French fries, sports drinks and soft drinks.

Aaron Chubb: (tambourine sounds) The sound of the RBC tambourine. Does it feel weird that it's an RBC tambourine? Yeah? Well you ain't seen nothing yet, I think Coca-Cola's on its way, too.

This is the RBC float and I'm Aaron Chubb reporting for Rise-Up Radio-free Edmonton as the Olympic torch wound its way through Edmonton. This report covers the underbelly of the Games and talks to those resisting the 2010 Olympics. (indistinct Coca Cola announcement in the background, followed by cheering)

Two Coca-Cola, big floats coming down the street in between every single float is a squad of police cars and the pork chopper flying over top. And the torch has arrived. As the torch arrived, a small group of protestors unfurled a banner that stated, “No Olympics. No tar sands on stolen native land.” We spoke to the connections between many of the main sponsors of the games and the tar sands, RBC being the biggest financier of both. But for a better understanding of this, I handed over to the Alberta legislature, where dozens of activists were protesting the torch, and spoke to Billie Pierre who is from the Nlaka'Pamux nation in the lower mainland where a super highway is being built from the tar sands to Vancouver port, impacting local, Indigenous communities.

Billie Pierre: The Olympics has a really negative impact on our lands. It's promoting ski resort development on our territories. It's impacting the water systems. Up in BC, the water comes from the alpiners; it's pure, you know we're very lucky, there's not very much pure water in the world. And it's being completely polluted by these ski resorts. And the Olympic torch relay just happened here in Edmonton and I wanted to say a few words about who created the Olympic torch relay? And that's the Nazis. The Nazis created that in 1936 when they hosted the Olympics in Germany and they did that to promote fascism. And then if you look at the people who are sponsoring, the corporate sponsors of the Olympics? You have the Hudson's Bay Company, who during their historical trade with the Natives, they wiped out our native populations by 50%. That's just during the fur trade. And if you look at today, RBC (Royal Bank of Canada), what they're doing here and now, well, they're the main founders of the tar sands, the Alberta tar sands, and that's the biggest industrial project in the world. It's negatively impacting the entire planet with its pollution. It's bad for everyone, and these are the people who are putting on the Olympics. These are the people who are benefiting the Olympics. And there's Crees, who are dying left and right from the Alberta tar sands that is polluting their water. You know, this is what the Olympics is all about. It's about promoting this corporate control of the world, so I just encourage all you native people out there to just really look at the history of the Olympics and learn about it before you just jump in and join

the bandwagon because they make it look fun, but it's not fun. It's impacting our lives. (chanting in background, "No Olympics on stolen native land!")

Aaron Chubb: The police left the protestors alone while they were in the large crowd, but I learned earlier that over on White Avenue a group of three protestors had been put in handcuffs and detained for chanting anti-Olympic slogans. I caught up with them on the edge of Churchill Square.

Laura Collison: I'm Laura Collison, you may have heard me on CJSR's "Adamant Eve."

Myles Curry: I'm Myles Curry from Terra Informa.

Scott: I'm Scott.

Aaron Chubb: Can you folks explain what happened earlier today before the torch run?

Laura Collison: Basically we were walking down White Ave. We had all just run into each other while we were in the neighbourhood and we were walking down beside the torch shouting things like, "Homes, not Games," "No Olympics on stolen land," things like that. And as soon as we were out there, the police were on their bikes right beside us following us down. And eventually they stopped us and they soon began hassling us.

Scott: There were also a bunch of cops on foot that were following us as well; double us in numbers or something.

Laura Collison: Then they asked who our leader was and what organization we were with and when we said we were citizens they told us that basically we had to tell them our names right away or we were going to be under arrest and I tried to ask why this is happening and I was placed under arrest.

Aaron Chubb: Okay and so all three of you were detained?

Laura Collison: Yes, we are all stopped. Two of us were actually arrested.

Myles Curry: They basically came right out and told me that the only reason they were stopping us was so we wouldn't proceed and they had the right to stop us because we were making a public disturbance. But really, they just said that we wanted to hold you up long enough so you guys couldn't continue down White Avenue. We weren't being disruptive, we were just having our voice heard and they chose to stop us and use their powers to stop our free speech. (chanting in background, "No Olympics on stolen native land!")

JS: Those clips were recorded on January 13, 2010 by Aaron Chubb of Rise-Up Radio at Edmonton's CJSR 88.5FM.

This is Deconstructing Dinner a syndicated weekly radio show and Podcast produced in Nelson, British Columbia at Kootenay Co-op Radio CJLY. Today's episode is archived on-line at deconstructingdinner.ca and posted under the January 14th, 2010 broadcast. The episode is revisiting our February 23rd, 2006 broadcast titled, A Dinner Date With the Olympics. Using new and original material from that episode, we've been examining two of the Games' major sponsors – Coca-Cola and McDonald's and the rather controversial and questionable relationship they maintain with a sporting event that seeks to promote health, co-operation and peace. Of course Coca-Cola and McDonald's are two of *the most* criticized corporations in the world for their environmental, economic and social impacts that their operations have and beyond that, the health impacts of their products. Certainly Coca-Cola and high-performance sports are an odd match, and just as we examined earlier, so too is the Olympic/McDonald's relationship.

As we heard earlier, our original 2006 episode featured sport dietician Jennifer Gibson who at the time was with the Vancouver-based SportMedBC. In questioning the confusing marketing messages found from connecting Coca-Cola to sport, Jennifer further comments on how Coca-Cola products stack up for athletes.

Jennifer Gibson: Well definitely Coca-Cola is highly concentrated with sugar. Its carbohydrate content checks in at about 11% which is a bit high. A lot of sports beverages and sports exercise scientists identified that 5-9% is an optimal range for sport drinks' carbohydrate concentration. And so Coca-Cola has about 11%. When you get up into higher percentages this kind of delays your stomach from emptying and extra water can be dragged into the gut which kind of robs your tissues of body fluids and some people actually have upset stomach and things like that when they consume foods during exercise that are too concentrated in carbohydrates.

JS: Jennifer Gibson has also worked very closely in some of her past work with the issue of childhood obesity, and when we think of childhood obesity, the very two companies we're speaking of today are very often the culprits that come to mind. Certainly what and how we eat are contributors to obesity, and higher consumption of sugars has often been linked to increased obesity – yet another conflicting message coming from the Olympic corporate marketing machine. Jennifer Gibson shared *her* thoughts on the subject.

Jennifer Gibson: Obviously it depends on whose side you're speaking from as well. If you're speaking from an industry side, you're going to deny it; you're not going to say, yeah, this is the case. In the case of soft drinks and high sugar drinks, there was a study that came out in '95 that was saying that the average

teenager was getting 15-20 teaspoons a day of added sugar from just soft drinks alone. And the consumption rates among children have doubled in the past decade. And then that has also shown a correlation between that intake and childhood obesity. I don't think that it's a lone ranger, and I think that that's something else we have to consider. It's not the only reason, there are obviously other factors. You could probably shoot it right back at the video games industry and try to come up with a study that showed a direct correlation there but I definitely agree that high sugar juices and beverages do contribute to overall extra calorie intake and obesity in the long run. And from my own practice, that was one thing we kind of started right away, just get rid of the juice, get rid of the soft drinks at home, just get rid of it because if children are having fruit, and not fruit juice, they can still get their vitamins and minerals. If they're having soft drinks, there's nothing in there, basically, nutritionally, that they're benefiting from.

JS: While the poor nutritional composition of Coca-Cola and McDonald's products is certainly an easy criticism to make in light of the companies' sponsorship of the Olympic Games, Jennifer Gibson does raise that obesity, disease and poor health is not just about what we eat. And so perhaps the more *conscious* intention of the companies to be as visible as they are alongside professional athletes and sporting events, is best captured by Timothy Lang of the City University in London, England. Timothy is one of the most renowned figures for his work on food policy issues. In an article that appeared in The Guardian, Timothy was quoted as saying that, It is, "very convenient for fast food and soft drinks people to sponsor sport, because by doing so they place all the emphasis on *activity* as the means of avoiding obesity rather than *both* activity and diet."

Now perhaps one of the most revealing indications of such intentions was on the Go Active website that McDonald's had launched not too long before we first aired our show on this subject in early 2006. The site was of course encouraging more active lifestyles and as McDonald's stated on the site, "It's all about energy balance, *not* dieting, which can be based on denial and deprivation." So here is some pretty ample evidence of the company's interest to wash their hands of guilt.

But the average North American lifestyle is becoming busier and busier, and there seems to be fewer and fewer hours to devote to exercise and the *prevalence* of fast food restaurants has, too, made it more and more difficult for more healthier options to be offered at other restaurants who have their own difficulties competing with such low-cost models of food production. This introduces what some refer to as "obesogenic environments" – that is areas where there are barriers to nutrition.

When we spoke with Jennifer Gibson in 2006, we asked her if she thought it was possible to challenge rising levels of obesity and poor nutrition by simply exercising more.

Jennifer Gibson: Well if you're eating something that's calorically dense, let's say the Big Mac Combo on a daily basis, then definitely not. That combo in itself contains over 1400 calories which, for some people, depending on their height and weight, is actually what their total caloric intake would be for the day.

JS: This is Deconstructing Dinner. In just a moment we'll hear once again from another voice who contributed to our *original* Olympics broadcast from February 2006 - Warren Nightingale who was at the time with the Media Awareness Network. Warren shared with us *how* parents and teachers can prepare children to better deconstruct the messages they receive from the media such as the conflicting food and beverage messages found alongside the 2010 Olympic Games. Similar to what we'll soon hear from Warren, Jennifer Gibson who was then with SportMed BC also believes education is a key step in combating these messages.

Jennifer Gibson: I think there's a definite need for nutrition education for the public and I think there's got to be a partnership between even just employers and government bodies where people are actively becoming more conscious about the long-term effects that poor nutrition can have on their health. And I think it's kind of one of those things where if it's not broke, don't fix it syndromes, where people who are slightly overweight, they don't feel any different from when they were maybe 10 or 15 pounds lighter and they're not recognizing what small physiological changes are happening in their body. And so they gain the 10, they gain the 15 pounds and it just starts creeping up over the years. And as we get older, those habits, especially nutrition habits, they become more ingrained in our behavior. So I did some research in the past on childhood obesity – they're the whole cohort of people out there, children that really, I think, nutrition education should be targeted to. But on the other hand, you've got parents who are role models for children who are also in need of that. So I think it's a real problem and I think it's a kind of national problem and I think it's going to take a multi-level approach to really change people's minds and trends around it. And as you said earlier, food is everywhere; you can get food anywhere nowadays. You're out at a lumber yard and there's convenience store snacks before you leave. It's really having people being more aware of what preventative medicine can do for their health in the long run. Because although they're not experiencing the physiological symptoms or diseases now, they're preparing themselves for them to be coming on down the road.

JS: And that was Jennifer Gibson – a registered dietician based in Vancouver. Jennifer was heard there speaking to Deconstructing Dinner for our original Dinner Date with the Olympics broadcast from February 2006. Jennifer was at

the time with SportMedBC - a not-for-profit society, whose focal point is sport medicine and science within the British Columbia provincial sport system.

McDonald's Advert: Man 1: Hey, wanna meet the team?

Voiceover: Just head over to McDonald's for these exciting USA Olympic Basketball collector's cups.

Man 2: Some are more exciting than others.

Man 1: Some are better looking.

Voiceover: Get one free!

Man: Free?

Voiceover: Whenever you buy any large sized soft drink.

Man: Large, like me!

Voiceover: All of them have exciting action-graphics and players' stats.

Man: Not bad.

Voiceover: For a limited time, team one up—

Man: --with large fries—

Voiceover: --and a big, beefy, triple cheese burger and you've yourself the Gold Medal meal.

Man: What you want, what you get at McDonald's today!

Man: Gold medal? I'll take two!

JS: As we approach the 2010 Olympic Games in Vancouver/Whistler, the world is being bombarded with advertising for Big Macs and soft drinks all alongside images of speed skaters, skiers and hockey players among other athletes. And while older generations might be seasoned enough to know that professional sport and optimal health do not connect well with junk food, what about the influence these messages have on children? The torch relay making its way across Canada for example is very noticeably attended by children, and as the big red Coca-Cola truck accompanies the runners, what is a child left to think?

To better understand how parents and *teachers* can better help children interpret such messages, Deconstructing Dinner spoke with Warren Nightingale for our original 2006 version of today's updated 2010 episode. Warren was at the time the Education Content Developer with the Media Awareness Network located in Ottawa.

The Media Awareness Network is a non-profit organization that has been pioneering the development of media literacy programs since 1996. Members of the organization have backgrounds in education, journalism, mass communications, and cultural policy. They promote media and Internet education by producing programs and resources available on-line to parents and teachers.

Warren Nightingale: For starters, sponsorship is a major contributor to the Olympics and the viability of the Games. However, what does this mean for Canadians who are viewing the events? Well, for starters, there's a strong sponsorship presence in advertisements, so this along with intense media

coverage means there's many messages that are being presented to the viewers of the Games. So one impact is the need for us, the viewers, to analyze these messages that inform, entertain us, and sell to us. We're required to bring our critical thinking skills as we do with all media, and its messages, by asking questions about what's there, noticing what's not there and to question what lies behind all these constructed images: the motives, the money, the values, the ownership. And to be aware of how these factors influence the content we see.

JS: Earlier on the show we spoke of the many efforts that Olympic sponsors such as Coca-Cola and McDonald's have made in marketing their products such as the companies' endorsements of athletes themselves. McDonald's as an example, sponsors former women's ice hockey player Cassie Campbell, speed skater Cindy Klassen, snowboarders Crispin Lipscomb and Brad Martin, and figure skater Patrick Chan. Warren shared with us his thoughts on how these endorsements affect younger audiences and he sheds light on *why* athletes are so willing to associate their names to these products.

Warren Nightingale: Well, as an educator, I think this is such a fantastic topic to explore with students, the impact of endorsements and how we can make a significant impact to amateur athletes. I think to really put into perspective we should consider that while training for the Olympics Canadian athletes receive roughly, approximately, \$1,500 a month and some need to maintain their day jobs. According to See You in Torino Fund, a non-profit organization dedicated to raising money for Olympic athletes, they say that 70% of amateur athletes live below the poverty line. So we can see how much of an impact these endorsements can make on the individual athletes themselves, especially for Olympic athletes whose media spotlight is limited in duration compared to athletes of other major events. The Olympics come once every four years whereas the Superbowl, the NHL Playoffs and NBA Playoffs are annual events, so there's just a lot of pressure for Olympic athletes not only to perform well but also to make the most of their endorsements. And when it comes to sports, children are major league fans, there was a study conducted a few years back that found that 93% of young people between the ages of 8 and 17 view sports on TV and close to one third use some kind of sports media daily, whether it be TV, video games, magazines, internet, radio, etc. And it's not just the boys that are fans, although they consume the greatest amounts of sports media, like 97%, but at 89%, the girls aren't far behind. So some of the most enthusiastic and loyal fans are children and so when an athlete speaks, they have a very dedicated and very attentive audience to listen to what they have to say.

JS: Just moments ago I shared a quote by professor Tim Lang of City University in London, England in which he comments on the motivation of junk food and beverage companies to sponsor sport to, "get themselves off the public health hook." I asked Warren to comment on this suggestion.

Warren Nightingale: Well marketing and brand recognition is a very competitive arena. I can see the attraction to sports in particular. Marketers are trying to plant the seeds of brand recognition in children very young and hope that these seeds will grow into a lifetime of relationships. According to the Center for a New American Dream, babies as young as six months of age can form mental images of corporate logos and mascots. Brand loyalties can be established as early as age 2 and by the time children head off to school, most can recognize hundreds of brand logos. So it's a very competitive arena especially when they can align themselves up with something that's attractive to kids as inherently sports is and the message is that sports have to deliver.

JS: With all of the ways through which companies target children through advertising, some groups have taken it upon themselves to try and reform the very regulations that govern such advertising within Canadian media. The Media Awareness Network on the other hand takes a *different* approach, and instead provides resources for parents and teachers to assist children to *deconstruct* the media. Here again is Warren Nightingale.

Warren Nightingale: One of the easiest and most effective ways is to look for opportunities that invoke discussion. There is so much we can draw from our daily interaction with media. Much of our media education approach isn't necessarily to have the right answers but rather try asking the right questions. In the classroom, I used to call this "teachable moments." Students and children have such a great interest in media and digital technology. They interact with it constantly; they're at home, doing their homework on the computer, they're doing that and instant messaging their friends, they're downloading music while the TV's on in the background. They interact with it on a continual basis. I think there's great opportunities for discussion as well as for encouragement for young people to create their own media by having young people go through this constructive process will help demystify the media-making process to which they will start asking questions when they're viewing media like why was this particular information used in the way it was or why was this technique used or what effect does this particular technique have or why was this piece of information not included at all? Now if parents and educators are looking for resources, I encourage them to go to the Media Awareness Network's website where they can find background information on media issues, resources for parents on how to discuss these topics with their children. There's research, for teachers there's also hundreds of classroom lessons that are free which can be found on our free teachers section. The address is www.media-awareness.ca and as well I greatly encourage teachers to get involved with National Media Education Week where they can explore the topics of media literacy in the classroom.

JS: With the many methods through which parents and teachers can assist children in deconstructing the media and advertising they are exposed to, it

raises the question, how prevalent is this form of education in our public school system? Warren comments.

Warren Nightingale: Well, the interesting thing is that Canada is considered to be one of the world leaders in media education, perhaps has in part to do with the whole idea of being the mouse beside the elephant. I think it's natural that Canadians would want to take a more analytical and reflective approach to media culture that has a great mass coming from the United States. Now implementing media education in Canadian schools has greatly increased over the last 10 years; we have seen that media's finally integrated into the English language arts program as another kind of text as well as a stronger presence in curriculum subjects such as health and social studies. Plus, there's also been more of a shift toward decentered learning, which I think works well with media education as well as sort of an extension of critical thinking skills downward from the secondary level into an elementary curriculum.

Although there's probably still a long way to go for full implementation of media literacy in the classroom, I think there's a strong foundation there and the future's optimistic for media literacy in Canada.

JS: Closing out our clips of Warren Nightingale who was at the time we interviewed him in 2006 with the Media Awareness Network, he closed by sharing some of his *personal* experience working with students and the impact that media literacy education can have on them.

Warren Nightingale: Myself, I spent 10 years in the classroom. Most of that experience has been working with at-risk youth. We developed an off-campus alternative program in which for me, my greatest success was implementing media literacy into the English classes. You know, if I was to start off my classes reading from a novel or anything, basically we'd get a lot of walls from my students. But if I was to bring a commercial for my students to deconstruct they would get very excited because they're so saturated with their experience with interacting with media that they just naturally sort of inherently understand even though they might not necessarily know it, a lot of the closing conventions of how media works. And I would basically start off small with deconstructing music videos, deconstructing commercials, asking very simple questions just on why was this camera angle used, why was this specific colour used for this sequence, things like that. And most kids are very engaged, and this is so interesting because as we talked further and one of the things we did in our program was try as much as possible to get kids creating media, that after awhile they were so excited to come to class and talk about the program they saw the night before, how the sequence of shots basically gave a certain influence to them and how that sort of generated conversation with their friends or family or things of that nature. So I think bringing real examples into the classroom can really be a spark for a lot of students, especially when, in turn, they get a chance to create media.

JS: And that was Warren Nightingale who we interviewed in February 2006 as part of our original 2006 episode titled A Dinner Date With the Olympics. Today's broadcast is an updated 2010 version as we approach the Vancouver/Whistler Winter Games. Warren was at the time with the Ottawa-based Media Awareness Network - a non-profit organization that has been developing media literacy programs since 1996. You can check out the organization on-line at www.media-awareness.ca. More links relating to today's episode can also be found on our website at deconstructingdinner.ca

And it's fitting as we near the end of today's broadcast to address what was, back in 2006 a prediction of the messages British Columbians and Canadians would receive come 2010. It was after all in March of 2005, that British Columbia premier Gordon Campbell launched the ActNow BC program. The program was launched as a lead-up to the 2010 Winter Games and here's a clip of Gordon Campbell launching the initiative.

Gordon Campbell: (upbeat music in the background) ActNow BC is about saying to individual citizens, "Here's some things you can do to have a better quality of life, to lead a healthier life," and there's two big ones. 30 minutes a day of physical activity – doesn't have to be at the gym; it can be walking up and down the stairs, in fact, at home; it can be taking your dog for walks. So that's one of the things: physical activity. And the other is: 5 servings of fruits and vegetables a day.

I will be eating the daily recommended level of fruits and vegetables! For those of you who don't know this is a basket of fruit and vegetable.

We know that has an enormous impact, positive impact on your quality of life as well as the pressures it puts on the health care system. Because the healthy living alliance has joined 9 organizations across the province; the Heart and Stroke Foundation, the Diabetes Association, Cancer Association. They're all there saying, "We know what makes a difference." So ActNow is about bringing these groups together. We've launched this, it's been done in Vancouver, Prince George, Campbell River, Comox, Smithers. We're trying to do it all over the province and again, it's not a government program – it's a personal program. It's a personal decision that I'm going to do something today to make my life better in the long-term. Our goal over the next 10 years is to be recognized for number 1, the quality of health our people have. We'd like to see a 20% reduction in the amount of obesity, a 20% *increase* in the amount of physical activity that we have in the province. Because again, we know people feel better, they learn better, their lives are better when they are physically active so we're trying to encourage people just to do a little bit. And they can do a little bit everyday – it makes a difference. So there's always energy and there's always enthusiasm. The question is: can we make that happen tomorrow? And then the next day.

So today was about a pretty gentle walk. You don't have to run 10k, you don't have to make a marathon. If those are goals you personally set – great. But really, what we're saying to people is: think about your lifestyle; think about what you can do. If we can spread that out across the province, it's going to be a prevention network across the province of activities that will make a huge difference in the long-term for everyone this year.

JS: British Columbia Premier Gordon Campbell speaking in 2005. Now you might be asking how does the ActNow initiative launched in that clip relate to the Olympics. Well it was also announced alongside the launch that the ActNow program was also about making British Columbia the, “healthiest jurisdiction to ever host an Olympic Games.”

Now on the surface that sounds like a laudable goal, but when we reflect on much of what has been shared today, that the 2010 Olympics does not exist without heavy, heavy marketing by companies like Coca-Cola and McDonald's as the Games major sponsors, well, Gordon Campbell's goals to, “decrease the prevalence of obesity and poor nutrition” seem quite short-lived.

With children especially being as susceptible as they are to marketing and public relation messages, it appears the publicly funded ActNow BC program is up against some pretty heavy competition, yet needless to say, the Province of British Columbia has nevertheless fully endorsed the Olympic Games and two of their major sponsors Coca-Cola and McDonald's.

Audio Clip – Coca Cola Advert (music background): If you've had a Coke in the last 80 years, you've had a hand in making every Olympic dream come true.

ending theme

JS: And that was this week's edition of Deconstructing Dinner produced and recorded at Nelson, British Columbia's Kootenay Co-op Radio. I've been your host, Jon Steinman. I thank my technical assistant, John Ryan.

This radio show is provided free of charge to campus community radio stations across the country and relies on the financial support from you, the listener. Support for the program can be donated through our website at deconstructingdinner.ca or by dialing (250) 352-9600.