Stonyfield Farm, an organic corporation started by Samuel Kaymen in 1983, really rocketed to prominence when its then president, Gary Hirshberg, discovered a way to increase his market share with not much marketing cost at all: where most companies marketed by saying all the benefits and improvements they have, Hirshberg began marketing what it did not have. And that missing thing was science.

Lots of sugar? His yogurt has that. Nonetheless, Hirshberg began marketing his yogurt as baby food. Powdered milk imported on giant emissions-belching ships from foreign countries? It has that [1]. Nonetheless, Hirshberg began marketing it as "organic" and therefore better for the environment even though there is no spot testing in the foreign countries he chose, not to mention those giant emissions-belching ships. Nor would anyone be able to tell the difference if there was spot testing. There is absolutely no way to detect in milk if a cow ate organic feed or feed that came from a GMO, that is why Europe bans most GMOs...except in animal feed.

But his scaremongering to suddenly concerned mothers was so successful he even launched a nationwide campaign, Just Label It, to increase his market share without needing any marketing at all - he sought to use the legislature to get his competitors labeled and then banned [2], in states like California and Washington, and in Washington, DC, where he got 53 Democrats and two Republicans [3] (so, they could technically call it bipartisan) to sign off on his movement. In the 2016 election he told Hillary Clinton [4], former Secretary of State and a Senator, that he knew more about Democrats than she did, and she could only beat Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont in the primary if she came out against GMOs. All Democrats were secretly against GMOs, he
He is a marketing genius, none of his fervent customers seem to know Stonyfield is actually owned by Lactalis a multinational conglomerate which has far more revenue than the Big Food Agrichemical company he is perpetually demonizing, Monsanto, and is constantly under criticism for exploitation in developing nations.

He may need to take back the reins of the industrial subsidiary. A recent commercial sought to appeal to those same concerned moms that this patronizing white man has mobilized in the past. In a #MeToo world, even those on his side of the political aisle have been calling Stonyfield out for sexism.

The vitriol is because their newest anti-science commercial uses little girls. At one time that would have been cute to highly-paid organic industry marketing executives, whose mantra has always been to appeal to wealthy mothers and suggest their products are better for families. The environmental movement is emotion-driven and they have long plucked on “it’s for the children” heart strings. Organic marketing executives know that if you don't have a superior product but you want a superior price, you have to cater to values rather than value.

What values do Stonyfield cater to with their new commercial using girls to terrify girls about science? If we accept that peers make a difference and that therefore young girls need Scientist Barbie and female doctor role models, the message Gary Hirshberg is sending when his company chose to have a video undermining the safety of our food supply is that girls need a multinational conglomerate like Stonyfield, chaired by a middle-aged white man, to protect them. #JustLabelItSexist

The message is that girls can't understand science. The message is that Stonyfield wants to train the next generation of females they believe are clueless about science, and they want to get to them at a young age.

In the 1950s and '60s, that was the tactic of Big Tobacco. If they were going to create smokers they had to get them hooked young. Today, Big Organic marketing is so corrupt that Big Tobacco is mimicking them.
After their latest campaign, the public is fighting back. When they were first criticized, Stonyfield declared the army of commenters “trolls” presumably built by Monsanto - you know, the company with billions of dollars less in revenue than either Lactalis or Whole Foods - and systematically deleted everything critical of their marketing effort. Instead of being trolls it was overwhelmingly farmers, scientists, parents not educated by advertising, and science journalists. In their response after the blowback, their supporting documentation for why they promoted scary stories about GMOs while knowing they are not harmful came from their own marketing literature and the trial lawyers at Environmental Working Group. And for good measure, the IARC Working Group, even though they know the guy behind it signed an agreement with trial lawyers to sue Monsanto in California before the paper on the hazard rating they chose for the herbicide compound glyphosate was even released.

Five years ago, bans on comments and lies about scientists and media would have worked. Not today. Stonyfield may have just lost its battle at Gettysburg and the people that are slaves to its anti-science spin will soon be freed.

NOTES:

(1) For $400,000, she listened but wisely did not take his advice.

(2) Edited to reflect that the sale to Lactalis had been completed. It previously listed Danone because the sale seemed to still be in process. Thanks to Michael Weinberg for finding confirmation that Google News could not. Humans rule.

http://inpublic.globenewswire.com/2017/08/02/DANONE+Danone+Completes+Sal...
Whereas the pro-science community has failed in that regard. How many times have we seen articles and ads about agricultural science that have pictures of tractors and graphics about higher yields? When only 2 percent of the country is in agriculture, they don't care that a company gives a farmer better profit margins.

Burberry ties are still just ties, if you are going to wear one most people will not notice if you paid $30 or $100, but they can charge $100 or more because they are selling the value of superior fashion. It does not matter how much money I acquire, I will never buy a Bugatti Veyron. It is still just a car to me. Bugatti knows their market, so they do not send me literature on buying one just like Dr. Bronner Magic Soap does not try to sell me their fashionable nonsense.