

Rory Robertson

August 2017

2017 exchange of letters between RR and ABC management about whether or not secret ABC investigation into *Lateline's* Australian Paradox report should be available on ABC's website

Readers, I think you should be aware that professional scientists from the University of Sydney in **May 2016** wrote a 36-page formal letter of complaint about Emma Alberici's ABC TV *Lateline* report that shredded the credibility of their extraordinarily faulty *Australian Paradox* paper <http://www.abc.net.au/lateline/content/2015/s4442720.htm>

In **September 2016**, Professor Jennie Brand-Miller and Dr Alan Barclay were advised via a 15-page official ABC response that an independent Audience and Consumer Affairs (A&CA) investigation had confirmed the *Lateline* report to be accurate and impartial on all reported matters of fact.

Last November, I requested a copy of the secret ABC report. So far, the ABC has chosen to suppress the report.

Readers, I'm arguing on public-health grounds that **(i)** it is in the community's interest to know that Professor Brand-Miller and Dr Barclay wrote a 36-page formal letter of complaint about the *Lateline* report that shredded the credibility of their *Australian Paradox* "finding"; and **(ii)** the community should be allowed to know that the ABC's formal investigation confirmed the accuracy of reports of profound flaws, including the paper's use of fake data.

Unfortunately, after being advised of the profound problems, instead of properly correcting the formal scientific record, Brand-Miller and Barclay have continued to pretend that their widely-cited paper is essentially flawless.

On Thursday of this week, the Charles Perkins Centre's infamous *Australian Paradox* fraud is set to feature at a national diabetes conference in Perth. The conference is the Australian Diabetes Society and the Australian Diabetes Educators Association Annual Scientific Meeting 2017: <http://ads-adea-2017.p.asnevents.com.au/days/2017-08-31/abstract/43981> ; <http://www.ads-adea.org.au/2017-program/>

So, Australia's largest network of diabetes educators - involving thousands of health-care workers - is set to hear (based on misinterpreted statistics and fake data) that added sugar is not a key driver of either obesity or type 2 diabetes. What a disgrace! Again, the Charles Perkins Centre's *Australian Paradox* research - based on fake data - is a menace to public health: <http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/USyd-Misconduct-in-ANU-PhD.pdf>

Readers, here is my 2017 exchange of letters with ABC management, in which I press for the ABC's independent (A&CA) investigation into *Lateline's* Australian Paradox report to be published on the ABC's website.

Regards,
Rory

16 June 2017

Subject: Re: A&CA's report on Australian Paradox investigation

From Rory Robertson <strathburnstation@gmail.com> to Mark Maley <Maley.Mark@abc.net.au>

Mark,

On the topic in the subject line, you wrote to me last year [in November] to say "I can't guarantee anything but it's certainly possible that a slightly redacted version will be released, which we'll send you. I can't tell you how long that will take but it's likely to be days or weeks rather than months."

I assume a decision has been made. May I have a copy of the Investigation report, please?

rgds,
rory

25 July 2017

From Mark Maley <Maley.Mark@abc.net.au> to Rory Robertson <strathburnstation@gmail.com>

Hi Rory

My apologies - I thought you had received a response. As you put in an FOI request it was considered as part of that process and my understanding was that it was declined. You should already have been notified.

Regards

Mark Maley
Editorial Policy Manager, News

25 July 2017

From Rory Robertson <strathburnstation@gmail.com> to Mark Maley <Maley.Mark@abc.net.au>

Hi Mark,

Thanks for your belated response. Actually, I did not "put in an FOI request". I asked for a copy of the A&CA's "Australian Paradox" report on public-health grounds.

That is, AC&A's report on its investigation of ABC *Lateline's* "Australian Paradox" program is further evidence of a serious scientific fraud at the University of Sydney that is harming public health.

Specifically, Professor Brand-Miller and Dr Barclay continue to promote what they say is a long-standing "inverse relationship" between sugar consumption and obesity, when they know that their (false) claim is based on fake sugar data, as well as a misreading of valid sugar data in their own simple charts.

Mark, I think it is a matter of fact that deliberately exaggerating one's evidence on an important scientific matter - by failing to properly correct the formal scientific record - is research fraud: <http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/Big-5-year-update-Feb-2017.pdf>

I recently wrote to the Australian Department of Health to advise that influential incompetence and fraud - including the false Australian Paradox claim - is behind the scandalous mistreatment of millions of Australians with, or at risk of, Type 2 diabetes: <http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/Expanded-Letter-HealthDept-type2diabetes.pdf>

I recall that the ABC published its AC&A's *Catalyst* "Heart of the Matter" Investigation Report when public health was said to be at risk: <http://www.abc.net.au/catalyst/heartofthematter/>

Accordingly, I'm asking that the AC&A's investigation report on *Lateline's* "Australian Paradox" program be published online or provided to me on the same public-health grounds.

Mark, if you are unable to provide me with the AC&A report on that basis, are you able to provide me, please, with the name and email address of a senior manager with whom I should have this discussion.

Obviously I am keen to get a copy of the AC&A report, in part because the University of Sydney in March this year outrageously expanded its Australian Paradox fraud into a third journal, the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*: p. 78 <http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/Big-5-year-update-Feb-2017.pdf>

rgds,
 rory

27 July 2017

From Mark Maley <Maley.Mark@abc.net.au> to Rory Robertson <strathburnstation@gmail.com>

Hi Rory,

I have checked and you are right – you didn't make an FOI request.

What happened was that I referred your request to the Head of Audience and Consumer Affairs. It is their document and I don't have the authority to release it. She told me that the ABC had received an FOI request for the same document (as well as various other internal documents) and that they would consider your request after determining the FOI request. I had nothing to do with the FOI request and was not informed who made the request. Sometime later I was informed that the FOI request had been denied and that, therefore, your request would also be declined.

I suspect I conflated the two requests and assumed you had been informed, or perhaps I simply forgot. I apologise for the oversight.

In any event the decision was not made by me and it is extremely unlikely that your request will be granted after another person's FOI request for the same document has been denied.

Regards
Mark Maley

27 July 2017

From Rory Robertson <strathburnstation@gmail.com> to Mark Maley <Maley.Mark@abc.net.au>

Thanks Mark for confirming those details. No worries on the delay.

I wonder if you can provide me, please, with the **name and email address of the Head of Audience and Consumer Affairs**, who appears to be the person I should approach to find out whether - on the basis of public-health concerns - I can be provided with a copy of the A&CA document that confirmed Lateline's report on the "Australian Paradox" is perfectly consistent with the ABC's editorial standards (ie. the program is factually accurate and balanced)?

As I noted, the ABC has published such documents online before. Accordingly, I'm keen to be provided with either a copy of the report, even one with some details redacted, or an official explanation on why it is in the public interest for the report to remain suppressed.

rgds,
rory

2 August 2017

From Mark Maley <Maley.Mark@abc.net.au> to Rory Robertson <strathburnstation@gmail.com>

CC: Kirstin McLiesh <McLiesh.Kirstin@abc.net.au>

Hi Rory,

The Head of Audience and Consumer Affairs is Kirstin McLiesh. I've given her a quick brief on our previous correspondence and copied her in. She's expecting an email.

Regards
Mark Maley

2 August 2017

From Rory Robertson <strathburnstation@gmail.com> to Mark Maley <Maley.Mark@abc.net.au>

Thanks Mark. I hope to get some time in coming days.

rgds,
rory

25 August 2017

From Rory Robertson <strathburnstation@gmail.com> to Kirstin McLiesh <McLiesh.Kirstin@abc.net.au>

CC: Wendy Carlisle; Emma Alberici; Maley.Mark@abc.net.au

Hi Kirstin,

My name is Rory Robertson. I'm the person who provided much of the factual content for the two main ABC reports on the Charles Perkins Centre's *Australian Paradox* scandal:

- Wendy Carlisle's *Background Briefing "Is sugar Innocent"* <http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/backgroundbriefing/2014-02-09/5239418>
- Emma Alberici's *Lateline* <http://www.abc.net.au/lateline/content/2015/s4442720.htm>

Mark Mailey suggested that you are the person from whom I should request a copy of the A&CA's *Australian Paradox* investigation report. (Some of MM's and my earlier email interaction is attached below.)

In my opinion, it is (now) in the community's interest to know that professional scientists from the University of Sydney wrote a 36-page formal letter of complaint to the ABC in May 2016, in response to Emma Alberici's ABC TV *Lateline* report, and that Professor Jennie Brand-Miller and Dr Barclay were later advised that an independent A&CA investigation confirmed the *Lateline* report to be accurate and impartial on all reported matters of fact. (So why has the formal scientific record been left uncorrected?)

Kirstin, MM (below) suggested that you have already made up your mind to tell me that the A&CA report should not be made public. If that is correct, I hope you will reconsider. Please at least let me make the case for simply posting the A&CA's report on the ABC's website.

For starters, it is relevant that I am writing to you several weeks later than I (and you) expected. (MM told me on 2 August that you were expecting an email from me.)

Apologies for the delay. Critically, the reason for this long delay is highly relevant to your decision on whether or not to publish the A&CA report online.

That is, I've spent much of my spare time in August preparing a formal response to **an Australian National University PhD thesis that was distributed widely online via Twitter.**

Outrageously, this July 2017 ANU PhD thesis contains a series of reckless false claims about me (and the ABC reports), via interviews with *Australian Paradox* authors Professor Brand-Miller and Dr Alan Barclay.

One extraordinarily and defamatory suggestion is that I bribed University of Sydney Vice-Chancellor Michael Spence, and that our corrupt behaviour is the main reason that Professor Brand-Miller and Dr Barclay in 2014 suffered the indignity of a research-integrity Inquiry (see first link below).

I'm not kidding!

Also via the ANU PhD thesis, Professor Brand-Miller and Dr Barclay pretend that their academic woes are simply the result of "a couple of misprints" and a misreading of their work by incompetent non-nutritionists.

They reportedly insist that their extraordinary faulty *Australian Paradox* paper is pretty much flawless, apparently claiming their research is fine - not at all fundamentally flawed - so there is no real problem with either their scholarship or the University of Sydney's quality control.

Kirstin, these untruths about the veracity of their *Australian Paradox* research are now being promoted to both academic and mainstream audiences.

Put another way, Professor Brand-Miller and Dr Barclay are treating with complete contempt factual *Background Briefing* and *Lateline* reports that shredded the credibility of both the *Australian Paradox* paper and its authors' professional competence.

To add insult to injury, Professor Brand-Miller - in the ANU PhD thesis - criticises Wendy Carlisle and Emma Alberici for unreasonably disrupting her (JBM's) important research agenda. Yet Wendy and Emma were simply doing their job, asking about the status of **the years-overdue "clarification" paper** that research-integrity investigator Professor Robert Clark AO recommended be written by Brand-Miller and Barclay.

In my opinion, there is strong evidence of ongoing pro-sugar research misconduct that is working to damage public health. Indeed, I have written that "the persistence of misconduct has helped to make the *Australian Paradox* scandal into maybe the best-documented case of serious research fraud in Australian history":

- Here is my formal response to the various *Australian Paradox* untruths contained in the ANU PhD: <http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/USyd-Misconduct-in-ANU-PhD.pdf>
- Further, I referred this latest outrageous research misconduct to the University of Sydney's Academic Board: <http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/Letter-USyd-Misconduct-ANU-PhD.pdf>
- Finally, did I mention that the Charles Perkins Centre in March this year outrageously expanded its *Australian Paradox* fraud into a third journal, the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*: p. 78 <http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/Big-5-year-update-Feb-2017.pdf>

Kirstin, with all that as background, I hope you might agree with me that it would be reasonable for the ABC to choose to post the A&CA's *Australian Paradox* investigation report on its website

What do you think? If you are determined not to post the report online, please provide me with **an official explanation of why it is in the public interest for a report carefully confirming key factual matters on the *Australian Paradox* paper to remain suppressed.**

Best wishes,
Rory

28 August 2017

Subject: Troubling new info Re: A&CA's report on Australian Paradox investigation

From Rory Robertson <strathburnstation@gmail.com> to Kirstin McLiesh <McLiesh.Kirstin@abc.net.au>

CC: Wendy Carlisle; Emma Alberici; Maley.Mark@abc.net.au

Hi Kirstin,

I hope you are well. I am surprised to be writing to you again so quickly.

Over the weekend, I discovered troubling new information that reinforces my case for you to post the A&CA's September 2016 *Australian Paradox* investigation report on the ABC's website.

As if to highlight my claim that the Charles Perkins Centre's *Australian Paradox* fraud is a menace to public health, we find that Professor Jennie Brand-Miller and Dr Alan Barclay's latest paper - the March 2017 paper that swept all the problems in the original paper, including fake data, under the carpet - is set to be presented to a diabetes conference in Perth on Thursday.

The conference is the Australian Diabetes Society and the Australian Diabetes Educators Association Annual Scientific Meeting 2017: <http://ads-adea-2017.p.asnevents.com.au/days/2017-08-31/abstract/43981> ; <http://www.ads-adea.org.au/2017-program/>

So, the premier education network for diabetes educators in Australia (involving thousands of diabetes health-care workers) is set to hear (based on misinterpreted statistics and fake data) that added sugar is not a key driver of either obesity or type 2 diabetes!

You may or may not agree with me, but I think this blatant contempt for research integrity and public health - as well as for Wendy Carlisle and Emma Alberici's factual *Background Briefing* and *Lateline* reports debunking the Australian Paradox - is outrageous.

Again, why has the formal scientific record been left uncorrected? Why are Brand-Miller and Barclay still pretending to scientists and health workers in the obesity and diabetes space that conspicuously fake data are real? (chart) <http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/USyd-Misconduct-in-ANU-PhD.pdf>

In conclusion, I'm arguing that it is **clearly in the community's interest to know** that professional scientists from the University of Sydney wrote a 36-page formal letter of complaint to the ABC in May 2016, in response to Emma Alberici's ABC TV *Lateline* report, and that Professor Brand-Miller and Dr Barclay in September were advised - via a 15-page official ABC response - that an independent A&CA investigation had confirmed the *Lateline* report to be accurate and impartial on all reported matters of fact.

Kirstin, I hope you agree that the case is strong for the A&CA's report on its *Australian Paradox* investigation to be posted on the ABC's website.

I await your response.

Best wishes,
Rory

28 August 2017

From Kirstin McLiesh <McLiesh.Kirstin@abc.net.au> to Rory Robertson <strathburnstation@gmail.com>

Dear Mr Robertson,

I have received your emails and will respond to you once I've had time to consider the material you've provided. As there are a number of other pressing matters requiring my attention at present, this may not be for some weeks.

Kind regards,

Kirstin McLiesh
[ABC] Head, Audience and Consumer Affairs

28 August 2017

From Rory Robertson <strathburnstation@gmail.com> to Kirstin McLiesh <McLiesh.Kirstin@abc.net.au>
CC: Wendy Carlisle; Emma Alberici; Maley.Mark@abc.net.au

Hi Kirstin,

Thank you for your prompt, if surprising reply.

Let me see if I have this straight: I advised you that a serious scientific fraud - outlined and debunked in Emma Alberici's *Lateline* report last year - is going to **feature at a national diabetes conference in Perth this Thursday**, and you responded by saying you'll consider the harm to public health some time down the track because "there

are a number of other pressing matters requiring my attention at present".

I hope you have a good reason for continuing to suppress the **15-page independent A&CA investigation report** that confirms the *Australian Paradox* scandal to be "maybe the best-documented case of serious research fraud in Australian history": <http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/USyd-Misconduct-in-ANU-PhD.pdf>

I look forward to hearing from you, when you eventually choose to decide whether the ABC should have regard for public health, or should instead try to suppress the A&CA's *Australia Paradox* report indefinitely.

In the meantime, I plan to do what I can to protect public health, including by alerting the community to the fact that **three separate taxpayer-funded investigations** have confirmed the University of Sydney's infamous *Australian Paradox* "finding" to be an academic sham: <http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/Big-5-year-update-Feb-2017.pdf>

Best wishes,
Rory

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rory robertson

economist and former-fattie

<https://twitter.com/OzParadoxdotcom>

Readers, a copy of my long-winded 2016 exchange of letters with the ABC is available on request.

During National Diabetes Week, I wrote to the Department of Health about "The scandalous mistreatment of Australians with type 2 diabetes (T2D)":

<http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/Expanded-Letter-HealthDept-type2diabetes.pdf>

Here's my *Five-year Update* on the *Australian Paradox* fraud, including Vice-Chancellor Spence's threat to ban me from campus: (p. 64) <http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/Big-5-year-update-Feb-2017.pdf>

Want to stop trends in your family and friends towards obesity, type 2 diabetes, heart disease and various cancers? Stop eating and drinking sugar:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xDaYa0AB8TQ&feature=youtu.be>

Here's the diet advised by Dr Peter Brukner, recently the Australian cricket team's doctor:

<http://www.peterbrukner.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/All-you-need-to-know-about-LCHF1.pdf> ;

<http://www.abc.net.au/catalyst/lowcarb/>

A life in our times: Vale Alexander "Sandy" Robertson (1933-2015):

<http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/AlecRobertson-born2oct33.pdf>

Comments, criticisms, questions, compliments welcome at strathburnstation@gmail.com

www.strathburn.com

Strathburn Cattle Station is a proud partner of YALARI, Australia's leading provider of quality boarding-school educations for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teenagers. Check it out at <http://www.strathburn.com/yalari.php>