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Date: Sun, Aug 10, 2014 at 11:37 PM

Subject: Letter to SydUni Academic Board: Professor Clark's flawed Initial Inquiry Report into the Australian Paradox scandal

To: chair.academicboard@sydney.edu.au, Jill.Trewhella@sydney.edu.au, vice.chancellor@sydney.edu.au, dvc.provost@sydney.edu.au, Michael.Spence@sydney.edu.au, vc.admin@sydney.edu.au, Stephen.Garton@sydney.edu.au, pip.pattison@sydney.edu.au, Shane.Houston@sydney.edu.au, tyrone.carlin@sydney.edu.au, Ann.Brewer@sydney.edu.au, marie.carroll@sydney.edu.au, mark.adams@sydney.edu.au, john.redmond@sydney.edu.au, duncan.ivison@sydney.edu.au, Chris.Peck@sydney.edu.au, business.dean@sydney.edu.au, fran.waugh@sydney.edu.au, archie.johnston@sydney.edu.au, Kathryn.Refshauge@sydney.edu.au, joellen.riley@sydney.edu.au, bruce.robinson@sydney.edu.au, jill.white@sydney.edu.au, pharmacy.dean@sydney.edu.au, trevor.hambley@sydney.edu.au, colin.rhodes@sydney.edu.au, karl.kramer@sydney.edu.au, rosanne.taylor@sydney.edu.au, anne.bell@sydney.edu.au, simon.barrie@sydney.edu.au, gillian.luck@sydney.edu.au, president@src.usyd.edu.au, tiho.ancev@sydney.edu.au, tina.bell@sydney.edu.au, stephen.cattle@sydney.edu.au, shyamal.chowdhury@sydney.edu.au, wendy.davis@sydney.edu.au, nicole.gurran@sydney.edu.au, rob.saunders@sydney.edu.au, william.christie@sydney.edu.au, ben.goldsmith@sydney.edu.au, nerida.jarkey@sydney.edu.au, kathryn.welch@sydney.edu.au, g.white@sydney.edu.au, jinlong.gao@sydney.edu.au, tania.gerzina@sydney.edu.au, sandra.vanderlaan@sydney.edu.au, susan.mcgrathchamp@sydney.edu.au, philip.seltsikas@sydney.edu.au, john.shields@sydney.edu.au, catherine.suttonbrady@sydney.edu.au, judy.anderson@sydney.edu.au, susan.colmar@sydney.edu.au, richard.walker@sydney.edu.au, rachel.wilson@sydney.edu.au, philip.leong@sydney.edu.au, david.lowe@sydney.edu.au, yiu-wing.mai@sydney.edu.au, andrew.ruys@sydney.edu.au, tim.wilkinson@sydney.edu.au, roger.bourne@sydney.edu.au, michael.millington@sydney.edu.au, elias.mpofu@sydney.edu.au, kieron.rooney@sydney.edu.au, roger.stancliffe@sydney.edu.au, elisa.arcioni@sydney.edu.au, mary.crock@sydney.edu.au, jamie.glister@sydney.edu.au, greg.tolhurst@sydney.edu.au, manuel.graeber@sydney.edu.au, peter.knight@sydney.edu.au, leslie.nicholson@sydney.edu.au, paul.young@sydney.edu.au, eagle.zhang@sydney.edu.au, jacqueline.bloomfield@sydney.edu.au, janice.gullick@sydney.edu.au, yun-hee.jeon@sydney.edu.au, thomas.balle@sydney.edu.au, bret.church@sydney.edu.au, mary.collins@sydney.edu.au, david.easdown@sydney.edu.au, anthony.masters@sydney.edu.au, caleb.owens@sydney.edu.au, jenny.saleeba@sydney.edu.au, charlotte.taylor@sydney.edu.au, brad.buckley@sydney.edu.au, john.conomos@sydney.edu.au, cherine.fahd@sydney.edu.au, michael.halliwel@sydney.edu.au, matthew.hindson@sydney.edu.au, david.larkin@sydney.edu.au, neal.peresdacosta@sydney.edu.au, Roslyn Bathgate <roslyn.bathgate@sydney.edu.au>, susan.matthew@sydney.edu.au, claire.wade@sydney.edu.au, p.white@sydney.edu.au, xavier.ho@sydney.edu.au, president@edsoc.org.au, usydatheists@gmail.com, agup5455@nulluni.sydney.edu.au, jane.hanrahan@sydney.edu.au, daniela.traini@sydney.edu.au, megan.kemmis@sydney.edu.au

Rory Robertson

Sunday, 10 August 2014

Initial Inquiry into Australian Paradox scandal wrong on 5 of 7 "Preliminary Findings of Fact"

Dear Chairman of the Academic Board, members of the Academic Board - <http://sydney.edu.au/ab/about/members.shtml> - and outside observers,

I'm sorry to have to write to you again about the Charles Perkins Centre's Australian Paradox scandal.

1. BACKGROUND

The profoundly faulty Australian Paradox paper falsely exonerates modern sugar consumption - especially via sugary drinks - as a key driver of obesity: <http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/quickquizresearch.pdf>

My previous letter to the Academic Board of The University of Sydney - <http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/Letter-UoS-Academic-Board.pdf> - prompted Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) Jill Trewhella in November 2013 to begin a research-integrity investigation.

Quick off the mark, on 9 February 2014, ABC investigator Wendy Carlisle reported on the Australian Paradox scandal for Radio National's Background Briefing program: <http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/backgroundbriefing/2014-02-09/5239418>

On 12 February, authors Professor Jennie Brand-Miller and Dr Alan Barclay responded to that program by publishing a disingenuous "Correction" in the journal *Nutrients*.

I say "disingenuous" because, despite the integrity of their "finding" of "an inverse relationship" between sugar consumption

and obesity having been shredded on national radio by investigator Wendy Carlisle, the authors claimed falsely that there was "no material impact on the conclusions of our paper": <http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/CPCscientistsresponse.pdf> ; <http://www.mdpi.com/2072-6643/6/2/663/htm>

Nevertheless, that disingenuous "Correction" of simple errors confirmed that no-one competent had read through the Australian Paradox paper before it was (self)

published: http://www.mdpi.com/journal/nutrients/special_issues/carbohydrates

The belated "Correction" thus made a mockery of Vice-Chancellor Dr Michael Spence's earlier claim that the profoundly faulty paper (see next section) had been properly "peer reviewed" before publication: (p. 1)

<http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/quickquizresearch.pdf>

2. BOTCHED INQUIRY WRONG ON 5 OF 7 "PRELIMINARY FINDINGS OF FACT"

On 26 June 2014, Professor Robert Clark AO presented Professor Trewhella with his "Initial Inquiry Report", the first stage of an investigation into the Australian Paradox scandal.

On 18 July, Professor Trewhella did two things. First, she published large parts of that report before anyone had properly "double checked" to see if Professor Clark's "Preliminary Findings of Fact" were factually correct.

Second, Professor Trewhella shut down the investigation, prematurely declaring that no research misconduct has occurred in the Australian Paradox scandal: <http://sydney.edu.au/news/84.html?newsstoryid=13779>

Despite being overlooked or deliberately ignored, facts remain facts. Accordingly, here is my Draft Response to Professor Clark's Initial Inquiry Report: <http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/RR-response-to-inquiry-report.pdf>

To summarise, I am deeply troubled by the unacceptably poor quality of Professor Clark's investigation. His Report failed to get to the heart of several critical matters. Key evidence was overlooked, ignored or misinterpreted. In particular:

(i) Five of Professor Clark's seven "Preliminary Findings of Fact" are factually incorrect: 1, 2, 3, 5 (or the second "4" as listed in the Report) and 7 on pp. 16-18 of <http://sydney.edu.au/research/documents/australian-paradox-report-redacted.pdf>

(ii) The University of Sydney now has - either inadvertently or deliberately - quietly "disappeared" my evidence confirming the FAO's falsification of data at the centre of this Australian Paradox scandal (see next section).

(iii) Beyond the ABS sugar series discontinued as unreliable by the ABS and then falsified by the FAO, the authors' own charts show various valid sugar indicators that tend to trend UP not down over the relevant 1980 to 2010 timeframe. How those uptrends in the valid sugar datasets eluded Professor Clark and Professor Trewhella also remains a mystery: see "SUMMARY OF AUTHORS' THREE 'LINES OF EVIDENCE' " on p. 10 in my Draft Response.

(iv) Professor Clark did not interview me, yet he interviewed the authors and had them comment on an early draft of his report. Neither Professor Clark nor Professor Trewhella allowed me an opportunity to correct his five false "Preliminary Findings of Fact" before the Initial Inquiry Report was published. According to Professor Clark, "...the Australian Paradox authors weren't sure about the detailed methodology underpinning FAO data..." [while]..."I indicated that we both needed to check the facts" (p. 8). Yet the call to me to explain the facts to them never came!

The bottom line here is that the credibility of Professor Clark's Initial Inquiry Report - and Professor Trewhella's response to it - collapses under competent scrutiny.

Why did Professor Trewhella not check to see if Professor Clark's "Preliminary Findings of Fact" were correct before she rushed to shut down the inquiry and to declare prematurely that no research misconduct has occurred?

In any case, this is an unacceptable state of affairs. A growing number of outsiders - and insiders! - are finding it hard to avoid the conclusion that Professor Trewhella's "initial inquiry" was designed to "exonerate" the Charles Perkins Centre's highest-

profile sugar-and-disease expert rather than to seek the cold hard facts at the heart of the Australian Paradox scandal.

As readers move through the issues below, two questions to be considered include: When does persistent negligence by researchers and their management morph into scientific fraud?; and Should Group of Eight scientists publish in and operate journals owned by those on Jeffrey Beall's infamous list of predatory publishers? <http://scholarlyoa.com/2014/02/18/chinese-publisher-mdpi-added-to-list-of-questionable-publishers/> ; <http://www.mdpi.com/journal/nutrients/editors>

3. IS IT OKAY TO SWEEP FALSIFIED DATA "UNDER THE CARPET"?

Members of the Academic Board, please make a special effort to consider the fact that - either inadvertently or deliberately - the University of Sydney has quietly, recklessly and outrageously swept the issue of falsified data "under the carpet".

I am outraged that Professor Robert Clark AO promoted an unfounded smear on my credibility and integrity, claiming: "Statements made by the Complainant [me] alleging that the United Nations FAO has falsified data are serious, and do not appear to be based on detailed evidence or inquiry" (p. 21).

Awkwardly, the detailed evidence that eluded Professor Clark continues to hide in plain sight on page 4 of my formal Submission: <http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/RRsubmission2inquiry.pdf>

The FAO's falsification of the Australian sugar series also is discussed in detail on pp. 12-13 of <http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/GraphicEvidence.pdf>

Note that my 2012 evidence that the FAO falsified its Australian sugar series after 1998-99 - <http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/FAOfalsifiedsugar.pdf> - **is in the same form - a series of emails** - as Professor Clark's 2014 evidence that the ABS sugar series was discontinued as unreliable (see next section).

That Professor Clark apparently did not read my Submission carefully or consider the evidence I provided on the FAO's falsified data is deeply troubling. What is going on here?

Regardless, this careless treatment of evidence explains how five of Professor Clark's seven "Preliminary Findings of Fact" turned out to be wrong: <http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/RR-response-to-inquiry-report.pdf>

Again, why did Deputy Vice-Chancellor Trewhella not bother to "double check" Professor Clark's faulty "Preliminary Findings of Fact" before inappropriately shutting down the investigation?

I say inappropriately because Professor Trewhella - having been advised several times - was or should have been aware that the FAO had falsified the critical early-2000s portion of its Australian sugar series. Professor Trewhella was or should have been aware of the evidence that somehow eluded Professor Clark.

Professor Trewhella was or should have been aware of the evidence that the FAO had falsified data because that evidence features in Question 8 of my Charles Perkins Centre Quick Quiz on research integrity: <http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/quickquizresearch.pdf>

Notably, Professor Trewhella highlighted that increasingly popular CPC Quick Quiz when she confirmed last November that a research-integrity investigation was to be undertaken: <http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/LettersProfTrewhella.pdf>

4. SCIENTISTS AND FOOD-INDUSTRY PARTNERS PROMOTING MISINFORMATION

Professor Clark's Initial Inquiry Report lurched towards fantasy when he claimed that the authors of Australian Paradox didn't really mean to exonerate added sugar as a key driver of obesity: Problem 8, p. 9 <http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/RR-response-to-inquiry-report.pdf>

Unfortunately, he made no comment about the authors also - separately - falsely exonerating sugar as a key driver of type 2 diabetes: (3 pages) <http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/diabetes.pdf> ; (3

pages) <http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/Sugar-myths-SydUni-GI-crew.pdf>

Professor Clark also was unreasonably generous to the authors in undertaking only minimal scrutiny of their associations with the sugar and sugar product industries: <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/health-science/a-spoonful-of-sugar-is-not-so-bad/story-e6frg8y6-1226090126776> ; <http://www.srasanz.org/about-us> ; <http://www.gisymbol.com/category/products/sweeteners/> ; <http://www.gisymbol.com/category/products/beverages/> ; <http://www.smh.com.au/national/health/research-causes-stir-over-sugars-role-in-obesity-20120330-1w3e5.html>

After all, it is well-documented globally that sugar-industry links tend to weaken the integrity of "peer reviewed" nutrition research: <http://www.plosmedicine.org/article/info%3Adoi%2F10.1371%2Fjournal.pmed.1001578> ; <http://www.motherjones.com/environment/2012/10/sugar-industry-lies-campaign>

On the positive side, Professor Clark did an excellent job in confirming my claim that the ABS discontinued its apparent consumption of sugar series after 1998-99 because of growing reliability problems that it did not have the resources to fix.

Back in 2012, in Parliament House Canberra, I highlighted that the ABS's apparent consumption of sugar series was discontinued as unreliable in part because of the particular difficulties in measuring the myriad millions of grams/grains of sugar already embedded in the many, many thousands of imported processed food and drink products. More recently, I highlighted those issues in February's Background Briefing report on the Australian Paradox scandal: from minute 18 at <http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/backgroundbriefing/2014-02-09/5239418> ; pp. 39-40 <http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/22Slideshowaustraliangoestoparadoxcanberrafinal.pdf>
By contrast, the authors misinformed Professor Clark's investigation by claiming again that the ABS series was discontinued "due to resource issues, not lack of reliable data" (p. 1, Attachment 3).

Importantly, the ABS's formal response to Professor Clark's inquiries - "These factors were supplied [to the sugar industry via Green Pool in 2012] along with appropriate caveats including that the ABS no longer believed them to be appropriate" (p. 5, Attachment 5) - reinforces my correct claim that Green Pool's shonky sugar series - is an industry-driven hoax: <http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/Sugarindustry-uni-sugarstudy25.pdf>

Again, the ABS sugar series became increasingly unreliable over its 60-year lifetime – via an intensifying multi-decade trend towards the increased consumption of manufactured/processed foods rather than home-cooked foods - before being discontinued as unreliable after 1998-99; so too, the ABS abandoned its counting algorithms as unreliable - "the ABS no longer believes these to be appropriate". This all confirms my observation that the Green Pool sugar series is unreliable – by disingenuous industry design - and cannot be trusted.

From the perspective of a research-integrity inquiry at a Group of Eight university, it matters a great deal that the sugar industry's disingenuous Green Pool series has been enthusiastically promoted by the Australian Paradox authors, by the Deputy Chairman of the Sydney University Nutrition Research Foundation, by the University of Sydney's Glycemic Index business and the sugar industry itself in a series of failed attempts to rescue the industry friendly but profoundly flawed Australian Paradox paper: <http://scepticalnutritionist.com.au/?p=514> ; <http://www.srasanz.org/about-us> ; <http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/New-nonsense-based-sugarreport.pdf> ; <http://www.sugaraustralia.com.au/Shared/Green%20Pool%20Report%20Media%20Release.pdf> ; http://www.srasanz.org/media/uploads/Is_Australia_Losing_Its_Sweet_Tooth.pdf

I remain highly critical of those blatant if lame attempts to make sugar appear to be less of a threat to public health than it is. Note the highly conflicted Australian Paradox authors' unreasonable description of the sugar industry's disingenuous Green Pool dataset as a "new independent review"! <http://www.theaustralianparadox.com.au/> (retrieved 10 August 2014)

The academic head of the Charles Perkins Centre, Professor Stephen Simpson, knows the background of sugar-industry representative Mr Bill Shrapnel - <http://www.srasanz.org/about-us> - being removed (after much jumping up and down by me) as "Deputy Chairman of the Sydney University Nutrition Research Foundation" (google it): <http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/LettersCPCProfSimpson.pdf>

5. PROPOSED NEXT STEPS

Members of the Academic Board, some of you may think I am wrong to pursue this matter. I wonder if you will continue thinking that after reading "HAS RORY ROBERTSON DONE THE WRONG THING?" on p. 11 of <http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/RR-response-to-inquiry-report.pdf>

To be clear, my ambitions on this matter with the Academic Board are modest. I am arguing near and far for the formal retraction of the false Australian Paradox "finding" of "an inverse relationship" between sugar consumption and obesity.

While Professor Trehwella seems determined to swim against the tide on the issue of retraction, many members of the Academic Board will be aware that it is common practice for profoundly faulty papers with false "findings" to be formally retracted, at a rate of about two per business day: <http://retractionwatch.com/2013/12/30/the-top-10-retractions-of-2013/>

In 2013, I spoke to the (then) CEO of Australian Paradox publisher MDPI, Mr Dietrich Rordorf, and he explained: **"It is up to the authors' university to commission an investigation into your claims of potentially falsified data. If the Publisher receives an official note from either the university or the academic editor to retract the paper, the paper will be taken down"** (see comments below in <http://retractionwatch.com/2013/08/22/journal-to-feature-special-issue-on-scientific-misconduct-seeks-submissions/>)

Now that the whole world can see for sure that the conspicuously flat-lining and dead-ending FAO sugar series at the centre of the Australian Paradox scandal - p. 3 in <http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/RR-response-to-inquiry-report.pdf> - is indeed falsified, it is time for the University of Sydney to advise MDPI that the profoundly faulty Australian Paradox paper should be retracted.

Given that the credibility of the Australian Paradox "finding" has been shredded now by several independent investigations, is my call for formal retraction unreasonable? If not, why has it not happened?

To the extent that retraction does not happen, my strong view is that the University of Sydney should re-open its Inquiry to confront the issue of falsified FAO data, and to confront the fact that five of Professor Clark's seven "Preliminary Findings of Fact" are false.

Similarly, few will be surprised that I think Professor Trehwella should resign from her position as Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research), to allow someone new to begin rescuing the fledgling Charles Perkins Centre's reputation for competence and integrity in research.

If formal retraction is not embraced as the way to proceed, perhaps the Chairman of the Academic Board will write to me, please, to explain why it is okay for Group of Eight scientists to promote falsified data in "peer reviewed" papers on the scientific record.

Perhaps Vice-Chancellor Michael Spence will write to me, please, to explain how it is reasonable for the University of Sydney to overlook - either inadvertently or deliberately - my well-documented evidence that a falsified FAO series sits at the heart of this Australian Paradox scandal.

In conclusion, I urge all members of the Academic Board to print out both this letter and my Draft Response to Professor Clark's Initial Inquiry Report and subject both to great scrutiny.

I encourage all members of the Academic Board and independent observers to assess my take on the facts of these matters, and please correct me if you think I am wrong.

In particular, I would like to hear from the Investigator, Professor Robert Clark AO; University of Sydney Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research), Professor Jill Trehwella ; and the Australian Paradox authors - Professor Jennie Brand-Miller and Dr Alan Barclay – if they think anything I have written in my Draft Response is factually incorrect or otherwise unreasonable. If concerns arise, I will, naturally, correct any matters of fact ASAP.

The early indications are that I have made no non-trivial errors. Over the first couple of weeks of public "peer review", no-one has proposed any corrections for my Draft Response to the Initial Inquiry Report.

Further public debate on the Australian Paradox scandal and other public-health matters can be followed simply by double-clicking on my Twitter handle below. The core question remains: Whatever happened to competence and integrity in research at the University of Sydney?

For the record, all this matters, in my opinion, because obesity, type 2 diabetes and heart disease - a.k.a. Metabolic syndrome or Insulin-resistance syndrome - are driven by excessive modern doses of carbohydrates, especially added sugar: <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0899900714003323> ; <http://care.diabetesjournals.org/content/33/11/2477.full.pdf> ; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9mzf4KSG6oQ> ; <http://archinte.jamanetwork.com/article.aspx?articleid=1819571>

Regards,
Rory

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rory robertson

[economist and former-fattie](https://twitter.com/OzParadoxdotcom)

<https://twitter.com/OzParadoxdotcom>

Are you getting fat and sick? Want to stop trends in your family and friends towards obesity, type 2 diabetes, heart disease and various cancers? Well, it's time to stop eating and drinking sugar: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xDaYa0AB8TQ&feature=youtu.be>

Join the push to give all kids a fairer start in life: <http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/Sugary-Drinks-Ban.pdf>

Game-changer! 26 doctors treating fat and sick present strong evidence for why Low-carb, high fat (LCHF) diets MUST become standard treatment for obesity and type 2 diabetes (aka metabolic syndrome): <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0899900714003323>

Click and scroll down for a time-tested diet to reverse obesity and type 2 diabetes: <http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/why-we-get-fat.pdf> Here's why it works: <http://garytaubes.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/WWGF-Readers-Digest-feature-Feb-2011.pdf> ; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D0GSSSE4I8U> ; <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bTUspjZG-wc>

Outsized rates of sugar consumption – alongside alcohol and tobacco – are a major driver of the unacceptable "gap" in life expectancy between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians: see the bottom row of Box/Table 2 in <https://www.mja.com.au/journal/2013/198/7/characteristics-community-level-diet-aboriginal-people-remote-northern-australia>

Isn't it ironic (or worse)? The Charles Perkins Centre's highest-profile obesity and diabetes experts have falsely exonerated as harmless the sugar that's devastating the health of those Australians who Charles Perkins cared most about: <http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/diabetes.pdf> ; <http://www.rethinksugarydrink.org.au/facts> ; <http://www.smh.com.au/national/university-sets-up-500m-centre-for-obesity-research-20130724-2qjq8.html>

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

www.strathburn.com

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Please reply "Please delete" if you would prefer not to receive further updates on these matters