

SEVEN-EMAIL DISCUSSION RE THE EXTRAORDINARY FAULTY *AUSTRALIAN PARADOX* PAPER, WITH UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY'S DEPUTY-VICE CHANCELLOR (RESEARCH), PROFESSOR JILL TREWHELLA

Hi there. Below this discussion is a lively interaction – a seven-email exchange from 12-13 September 2012 - with Professor Jill Trehwella, the University of Sydney's Deputy Vice Chancellor, Research.

Professor Trehwella presumably oversees the integrity of the University's academic and scientific research. With the controversial *Australian Paradox* papers having become an academic disgrace, the University no doubt would like the problem to go away with a minimum of fuss.

By contrast, I'm seeking to encourage the University to correct or retract the "shonky sugar study", because that analysis involves eye-popping errors (Slides 9, 10, 17, 38-42) and promotes a spectacularly false conclusion that's become a menace to public health (Slide 46 at <http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/AUSTRALIAN-PARADOX-101-SLIDESHOW.pdf>).

In my opinion, the University of Sydney's response so far to the disturbing issues raised in the *Australian Paradox* episode has left much to be desired. One possibility is that the University is struggling to balance:

- its desire to maintain a high standard of academic and scientific integrity in its research; against
- its desire to maintain and grow the low-GI enterprise to which its *Australian Paradox* authors are devoted.

It's a difficult balance and in the end the University of Sydney can do one thing or it can do the other. It cannot do both. **I say that the University should simply do what is right. I say that the University of Sydney should correct or retract the deeply flawed and possibly fraudulent *Australian Paradox* papers - which now are both a menace to public health and an academic disgrace – without further unreasonable delay.**

While we are waiting for the University to act, **I urge a public investigation into this growing academic and public-health scandal.** And if any such investigation finds strong evidence of scientific misconduct, the authors of the *Australian Paradox* papers in my opinion should be removed from their positions at the University of Sydney, the Australian Diabetes Council and any other positions touching important public-health matters.

Regards,
Rory

1. RR'S EMAIL TO UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY MANAGEMENT, SCIENTISTS AND OUTSIDE OBSERVERS

From: rory robertson [mailto:strathburnstation@gmail.com]

Sent: Wednesday, September 12, 2012 10:00 AM

Subject: fyi: Slideshow of factual errors, false conclusions, undisclosed conflict of interest and possible scientific misconduct at the University of Sydney

Good morning,

The *Australian Paradox* dispute now has been underway for six months and counting. For those new to the discussion, I'm arguing near and far for the deeply flawed *Australia Paradox* paper's **correction or retraction**, based on the facts comprehensively documented in my new slideshow. For the most **glaring errors** in the "Australian Paradox" episode, see **Slides 8-11 and 40** in <http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/AUSTRALIAN-PARADOX-101-SLIDESHOW.pdf>

So far, the University of Sydney has conceded nothing. Yes, the University of Sydney's *Australian Paradox* paper is dominated by serious errors - culminating in the spectacularly false conclusion of "**an inverse relationship**" between the **consumption of added sugar and obesity** - but its scientists Dr Alan Barclay and Professor Jennie Brand-Miller - Australia's highest-profile academic defenders of added sugar in food as harmless - unreasonably have conceded nothing, except that Rory Robertson is "not a nutritionist" so doesn't know what he is talking about.

Other unsettling aspects of the paper's publication include that it started life as "a Masters of Nutrition and Dietetic project conducted by and co-supervised by AWB and JBM", while lead author JBM also wore a second hat as "Guest Editor" of the relevant "Special Issue" of the *Nutrients* journal.

In any case, Professor Robert Lustig, Dr Rosemary Stanton and Professor Boyd Swinburn (Slides 23-25) have publicly agreed with me that the paper's conclusion is hopelessly wrong. Most recently, **Chris Forbes-Ewan** - "Senior Nutritionist" at Defence Science and Technology Organisation - has done a spectacular backflip on the merits of the paper - from enthusiastically promoting it as a must-read in 2011 to noting that its conclusion is false and running a mile from the controversial paper in 2012 (Slide 27).

Disturbingly, **University of Sydney Vice-Chancellor Dr Michael Spence** unwisely has vouched for the veracity of the deeply flawed paper (Slide 28). There also is the issue of **the University of Sydney's undisclosed conflict of interest** involving revenues generated at its Glycemic Index enterprise (Slide 50).

Why not try to prove that my critique is wrong, by taking my **\$40,000 Australian Paradox Challenge!** (Slides 3 and 29). In three months so far, however, not one of the University of Sydney's scores of fine scientists or anyone else has come within cooee taking [sic] the cash. No-one has put even a dent in the critique that devastated the credibility of *Australian Paradox*.

Somehow not strangled at birth, the *Australian Paradox* paper has grown up to be an **academic disgrace** (Slides 8-11 and 36-45) and a **menace to public health** (Slide 46).

After looking at the facts of the matter, please hit "Reply" if you come a [sic] strong view that the University of Sydney - via Vice-Chancellor Dr Michael Spence - should *not* correct or retract its "shonky sugar study".

To the extent that the controversial paper is not corrected, I'll be arguing that public research subsidies paid to the University of Sydney should be reduced substantially. After all, taxpayers are unlikely to be keen to continue to subsidise a University that publishes, republishes and then refuses to correct factually incorrect conclusions that survive - attached to the prestigious University's badge of credibility - to become a menace to their own health and that of their children (Slide 46).

rgds,
rory

2. UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY DEPUTY VICE CHANCELLOR'S STERN RESPONSE TO RR

On Wed, Sep 12, 2012 at 11:42 PM, Jill Trehwella <jill.trehwella@sydney.edu.au> wrote:

Dear Mr Robertson

I write in response to your email of September 12, 2012 (subject fyi: Slideshow of factual errors....).

The scientists whose results you disagree with have followed accepted scientific practice by publishing their ideas and findings in peer reviewed academic journals. If you wish to seriously challenge their publications, the appropriate course would be for you to present your own ideas and findings in a similar manner. **The approach that you have taken in sending a series of emails raising serious, unsubstantiated allegations against these researchers and the University is inappropriate and potentially defamatory.**

I ask that you cease these communications and encourage you to publish your ideas in an appropriate forum.

Sincerely
Jill Trehwella
Deputy Vice Chancellor, Research

3. RR'S DETAILED INITIAL RESPONSE TO UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY DEPUTY VICE CHANCELLOR, RESEARCH

From: rory robertson [mailto:strathburnstation@gmail.com]

Sent: Thursday, September 13, 2012 1:01 PM

To: Jill Trehwella

Cc: vice.chancellor@sydney.edu.au, dvc.provost@sydney.edu.au, chair.academicboard@sydney.edu.au, stephen.simpson@sydney.edu.au, Michael.Spence@sydney.edu.au, Stephen.Garton@sydney.edu.au, Derrick.Armstrong@sydney.edu.au, Shane.Houston@sydney.edu.au, John.Hearn@sydney.edu.au, Ann.Brewer@sydney.edu.au, Gwynnyth.Llewellyn@sydney.edu.au, Kathryn.Refshauge@sydney.edu.au, Chris.Peck@sydney.edu.au, Bruce.Robinson@sydney.edu.au, Jill.White@sydney.edu.au, chris.coffey@sydney.edu.au, debbie.bowman@sydney.edu.au, tim.payne@sydney.edu.au, andre.w.potter@sydney.edu.au, rebecca.murray@sydney.edu.au, jane.oakeshott@sydney.edu.au, meryl.bradford@sydney.edu.au, vc.admin@sydney.edu.au, kim.bellanderson@sydney.edu.au, helen.agus@sydney.edu.au, tony.weiss@sydney.edu.au, a.weiss@usyd.edu.au, soumela.amanatidis@sydney.edu.au, margaret.allmanfarinelli@sydney.edu.au, jain.campbell@sydney.edu.au, dee.carter@sydney.edu.au, ian.caterson@sydney.edu.au, charles.collyer@sydney.edu.au, arthur.conigrave@sydney.edu.au, stuart.cordwell@sydney.edu.au, ben.crossett@sydney.edu.au, gareth.denyer@sydney.edu.au, tom.ferenci@sydney.edu.au, k.downard@sydney.edu.au, mitchell.guss@sydney.edu.au, vanessa.gysbers@sydney.edu.au, ruth.hall@sydney.edu.au, dale.hancock@sydney.edu.au, hush_n@chem.usyd.edu.au, noel.hush@sydney.edu.au, jill.johnston@sydney.edu.au, katherine.jukic@sydney.edu.au, philip.kuchel@sydney.edu.au, vincy.li@sydney.edu.au, tim.newsome@sydney.edu.au, margaret.nicholson@sydney.edu.au, hannah.nicholas@sydney.edu.au, anna.rangan@sydney.edu.au, reeves@angis.usyd.edu.au, peter.reeves@sydney.edu.au, margaret.sunde@sydney.edu.au, s.truswell@mm.b.usyd.edu.au, peter.waterhouse@usyd.edu.au, peter.waterhouse@sydney.edu.au

Subject: fyi: University of Sydney's stern response to RR, RR's response to University of Sydney

Dear Professor Trehwella (and outside observers),

Thanks for your late-night note arguing that I have done the wrong thing in bringing the sub-standard, factually incorrect and somewhat dangerous aspects of the widely cited *Australian Paradox* paper - produced at the University of Sydney under your oversight? - to a wider audience.

Professor Trehwella, I note that you are the University of Sydney's "Deputy Vice Chancellor, Research". I'm surprised I've not heard from you long before now. I don't want to be ungracious but I have brought these serious matters to your attention repeatedly since March.

You seem to put important weight on the "peer review" process. I have explained in detail in earlier letters to the journal and the University that the fact that serious factual errors culminating in a spectacularly false conclusion have been published - twice - means that the peer-review process was - twice - either non-existent, incompetent or ignored. Like the lead author also operating as "Guest Editor" in charge of quality control in the publication process, the complete failure of the journal's now-much-advertised peer-review process - twice - is one of the various unsettling aspects of this episode.

Professor Trehwella, I do agree with you that the concerns I have raised are very serious. But are you serious when you call my concerns "unsubstantiated"? The 52-page document I have sent to you and other senior members of the University's management team - including the Vice-Chancellor and the Provost - and outside observers is rather substantial: <http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/AUSTRALIAN-PARADOX-101-SLIDESHOW.pdf> .

The worst that has been said of this document in its public outings so far is that it is long-winded. I agree. Perhaps like Mark Twain I need to apologise for writing a long letter because I didn't have time to write a short one!

My well-documented concerns are summarised in Slide 2, and then explained in great detail on Slides 8-20 and 36-42. Actually, your scientists', the journal's and the University's combined lack of any appropriate response on this matter - for six months - has forced me to go to ridiculous lengths to properly document and highlight my concerns about the negligent research being published - and defended - by the University of Sydney.

You will note - from my Slides 28, 30, 31 and 35 - that I have previously raised these issues at the highest levels of the *Nutrients* journal (Guest Editor and Editor-in-Chief) and the University (Vice-Chancellor), and have been rebuffed repeatedly without any reasonable explanation of the serious factual errors highlighted in my critique.

Professor Trewhella, I am happy for you or anyone else to point out any factual errors I have made in my claims. My response would be to correct my document immediately. I am confident I have not made any (non-trivial) errors. I am confident that my critique is correct for several reasons, including because no-one from the University of Sydney or anywhere else has - after three months - collected the cash - or the published apologies - on offer in my \$40,000 Australian Paradox Challenge (Slides 3 and 29).

If you have read even the first 20% of my substantial 52-page critique, Professor Trewhella, you would be aware that your scientists' disputed work is dominated by major errors. In particular, how do you explain the obvious and serious errors documented in my Slides 9 and 10 (for starters)?

We should be able to agree that these are not just "results" I happen to "disagree" with. In fact, Professor Trewhella, these are serious and obvious errors, as plain as the noses on our faces. These are serious errors that should have been acknowledged and corrected by the authors, the journal and/or the University long before now. Yet so far, nothing has been acknowledged or conceded, let alone corrected.

So please let's have no more pretending that the controversial *Australian Paradox* paper is free of serious errors, or that your scientists have not been remiss in leaving these serious errors uncorrected. It is because these errors are so serious and so dominating, Professor Trewhella, that we find ourselves writing to each other late at night when we should be tucked up asleep in our respective beds.

Importantly, Dr Rosemary Stanton, Professor Boyd Swinburn and Professor Robert Lustig each have publicly agreed with me that the paper's analysis is deeply flawed and that its conclusion belies the facts (Slides 23-25). Indeed, even one of your authors/scientists has inadvertently but convincingly contradicted his own *Australian Paradox* conclusion in a public presentation (Slide 26).

I wonder, Professor Trewhella, if you are prepared to agree that my Slides 9 and 10 document serious errors? That is, the relevant data series in Figure 5A clearly increased by 30% between 1994 and 2006 (from 35ish to 45ish) yet your scientists have published the claim that it "decreased by 10%" over that timeframe (Slide 9). And then - in *Australian Paradox Revisited* - published the subsequent claim that there are no errors in the original analysis. (Only in a parallel - inverted? - universe, where up means down.)

And how about your scientists' preferred FAO series being based on an ABS dataset that was discontinued as unreliable by the ABS more than a decade before the *Australian Paradox* paper was published? How is it that the (only) valid data series ends at 1998-99 yet your scientists have published a chart out to 2003? Notice in Slide 10 the strangely flat readings for the green line after 1998-99!

Professor Trewhella, do you agree that it was outrageous - and possibly an example of scientific misconduct - for your scientists and *Nutrients* to publish a rebuttal of my critique - *Australian Paradox Revisited* - without noting let alone conceding these serious errors?

Assuming you concede that these indeed are serious errors, Professor Trewhella, please could you explain how they were twice "peer reviewed" and then - bizarrely - twice published or verified as valid?

Unless you have a better explanation, I'll stick with my long-standing observation that *Nutrients*' "peer review" system in this case was broken - non-existent, incompetent or ignored - perhaps in part because the influential lead author of the disputed paper also happened to be wearing the hat of "Guest Editor" of the relevant "Special Issue" of *Nutrients*.

In such circumstances, Professor Trewhella, I violently disagree with your argument that "...the appropriate course would be for you [me] to present your [my] own ideas and findings in a similar manner".

In my opinion, the appropriate thing for me to do in those circumstances was to make it known to the proper authorities that the journal's and the University's quality-control systems are broken. This I have done. Indeed, I have put a great deal of time and effort into substantiating my concerns and communicating them to the highest levels of both

the journal and the University. I am at it again tonight. For the record, here (in order) are my March and May letters to the *Nutrients* journal's Editorial Board and my June letter to University of Sydney Vice-Chancellor Dr Michael Spence:

- <http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/LETTER%201%20TO%20NUTRIENTS.pdf>
- <http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/TimeforNeweditor24052012.pdf>
- <http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/SydneyUniVC%20LETTER070612.pdf>

I think that all competent and objective observers would agree that clearly there have been:

- **problems with the non-existent, incompetent or ignored peer-review processes at the *Nutrients* journal; and**
- **problems with the University of Sydney's lack of any reasonable response to seriously negligent research published under its trusted banner of credibility.**

Professor Trewhella, the University of Sydney should do what it can to fix these problems without further unreasonable delay. In my opinion, you and your senior University of Sydney colleagues should, for starters:

- **investigate exactly how that series of serious errors was "peer reviewed" and published (twice);**
- **ensure the public-health menace (Slide 46) and academic disgrace (Slides 8-20) that is the Australian Paradox paper is corrected or retracted; and**
- **fix the University's broken quality-control systems so that future sub-standard papers like *Australian Paradox* are properly "nipped in the bud".**

If some of my facts or reasoning above are faulty, Professor Trewhella, please correct me and I will respond appropriately. Indeed, I have offered to publish genuine apologies to your scientists in national newspapers if the University of Sydney or anyone else anywhere is able to show that my core critique of your scientists' negligent analysis is mistaken (Slides 3 and 29).

Believe it or not, Professor Trewhella, I consider that my behaviour in this matter has been perfectly reasonable and that it is your scientists, the journal and the University itself that together need to explain and fix the results of combined and repeated negligence. So, please do not send me another note stating seriously - or pretending? - that I am at fault in this dispute.

Again, I have documented rather clearly that your scientists have published a series of serious errors in a supposedly peer-reviewed paper in a science journal. Then they rushed off and republished their false conclusion as fact - in *Australian Paradox Revisited* - even after they had been advised very clearly of the dominating errors that needed to be corrected (Slides 8-19). Professor Trewhella, the peer-review system - to which you assign such great importance - was hopeless in practice, if it was not merely a charade.

To cap off this fiasco, as recently as two weeks ago your University of Sydney scientists were still populating the public debate on obesity - alongside diabetes ("diabesity"), the biggest public-health issue of our time - with false facts via their discredited *Australian Paradox* paper (see <http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/8-QUESTIONS-FOR-AWB-&-JBM-BANNED.pdf> and the second green box at <http://www.abc.net.au/health/features/stories/2012/08/30/3578541.htm#.UFDLYI4rz8s>).

In summary, Professor Trewhella, I respectfully suggest that you and other members of the University of Sydney's senior-management team consider the substance of my concerns - as documented in great detail in <http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/AUSTRALIAN-PARADOX-101-SLIDESHOW.pdf> - and carefully benchmark the clear facts in this episode against the various aspects of "Research misconduct" as described on page 10.1 in http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/files_nhmrc/publications/attachments/r39.pdf .

As you would be aware, Professor Trewhella, all I am seeking is the correction of the obvious errors in *Australian Paradox*. I am not insisting that your scientists be fired or forced to resign for possible misconduct. Your scientists and the journal already have formally corrected minor errors with their referencing in the disputed paper (Slide 34), so it hardly seems unreasonable to insist that they also correct serious factual errors (Slides 9 and 10).

To the extent that the high-profile but faulty *Australian Paradox* paper is not corrected, I'll increasingly be urging a public investigation into this disturbing episode, and arguing that public-research subsidies paid to the University of Sydney should be reduced substantially. After all, taxpayers are unlikely to be keen to subsidise a University that publishes, republishes and then refuses to correct factually incorrect conclusions that survive - attached to the prestigious University's badge of credibility - to become a menace to their own health and that of their children (Slide 46).

I note that the University's research efforts are in the process of transformation after having established "a centre for research into obesity, diabetes and cardiovascular disease [soon to be based in a new \$385 million building] that aims to significantly reduce the personal and social burden of these conditions by transforming the way we eat, work and live" (<http://sydney.edu.au/alumni/sam/july2011/unique-research-centre.shtml>).

May I suggest that an important step in the University of Sydney's new research strategy should be lifting research quality control, starting with the correction of the somewhat dangerous *Australian Paradox* paper (Slide 46) and in the future rooting out other dodgy papers before publication. In my presentation, I've suggested that Group of Eight Universities should prohibit their scientists from publishing in dodgy pay-as-you-publish E-journals that may or may not be more concerned about their business models than about quality control and the damage faulty papers can wreak on public health (Slide 47).

Professor Trewhella, I would welcome further discussion of these serious matters with you and/or other members of the University of Sydney's senior management, either via further email correspondence or in a meeting at the University. On the latter, please let me know if there are a couple of particular times in the coming week that would be convenient for a chat over a cup of tea.

In the meantime, I am happy for this correspondence to be shared with your colleagues and/or interested observers.

rgds,
rory

4. UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY DEPUTY VICE CHANCELLOR'S SECOND RESPONSE

On Thu, Sep 13, 2012 at 1:32 PM, Jill Trewhella <jill.trewhella@sydney.edu.au> wrote:

Cc: vice.chancellor@sydney.edu.au, dvc.provost@sydney.edu.au, chair.academicboard@sydney.edu.au, stephen.simpson@sydney.edu.au, Michael.Spence@sydney.edu.au, Stephen.Garton@sydney.edu.au, Derrick.Armstrong@sydney.edu.au, Shane.Houston@sydney.edu.au, John.Hearn@sydney.edu.au, Ann.Brewer@sydney.edu.au, Gwynnyth.Llewellyn@sydney.edu.au, Kathryn.Refshauge@sydney.edu.au, Chris.Peck@sydney.edu.au, Bruce.Robinson@sydney.edu.au, Jill.White@sydney.edu.au, chris.coffey@sydney.edu.au, debbie.bowman@sydney.edu.au, tim.payne@sydney.edu.au, andrew.potter@sydney.edu.au, rebecca.murray@sydney.edu.au, jane.oakeshott@sydney.edu.au, meryl.bradford@sydney.edu.au, vc.admin@sydney.edu.au, kim.bellanderson@sydney.edu.au, helen.agus@sydney.edu.au, tony.weiss@sydney.edu.au, a.weiss@usyd.edu.au, soumela.amanatidis@sydney.edu.au, margaret.allmanfarinelli@sydney.edu.au, jain.campbell@sydney.edu.au, dee.carter@sydney.edu.au, ian.caterson@sydney.edu.au, charles.collyer@sydney.edu.au, arthur.conigrave@sydney.edu.au, stuart.cordwell@sydney.edu.au, ben.crosssett@sydney.edu.au, gareth.denyer@sydney.edu.au, tom.ferenci@sydney.edu.au, k.downard@sydney.edu.au, mitchell.guss@sydney.edu.au, vanessa.gysbers@sydney.edu.au, ruth.hall@sydney.edu.au, dale.hancock@sydney.edu.au, hush_n@chem.usyd.edu.au, noel.hush@sydney.edu.au, jill.johnston@sydney.edu.au, katherine.jukic@sydney.edu.au, philip.kuchel@sydney.edu.au, vincy.li@sydney.edu.au, tim.newsome@sydney.edu.au, margaret.nicholson@sydney.edu.au, hannah.nicholas@sydney.edu.au, anna.rangan@sydney.edu.au, reeves@angis.usyd.edu.au, peter.reeves@sydney.edu.au, margaret.sunde@sydney.edu.au, s.truswell@mmb.usyd.edu.au, peter.waterhouse@usyd.edu.au, peter.waterhouse@sydney.edu.au

Dear Rory:

I reiterate my advice to you to present your own ideas and findings for peer review as the researchers with whom you disagree have done. This is the internationally accepted standard practice for presenting new research results and for resolving differences in interpretation of research data.

If you wish to engage me again on this topic, please do so by sending me a reprint of a publication that you have had accepted by a peer reviewed journal.

I also request that you do not continue broadcasting your personal interpretation of my statements using language that adds new meaning.

Sincerely,
Jill Trehwella

5. RR'S SECOND RESPONSE TO UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY DEPUTY VICE CHANCELLOR, RESEARCH

From: rory robertson <strathburnstation@gmail.com>

Date: Thu, Sep 13, 2012 at 2:57 PM

Subject: fyi: Another feisty back and forth... Re: University of Sydney's stern response to RR, RR's response to University of Sydney

To: Jill Trehwella <jill.trehwella@sydney.edu.au>

Cc: vice.chancellor@sydney.edu.au, dvc.provost@sydney.edu.au, chair.academicboard@sydney.edu.au, stephen.simpson@sydney.edu.au, Michael.Spence@sydney.edu.au, Stephen.Garton@sydney.edu.au, Derrick.Armstrong@sydney.edu.au, Shane.Houston@sydney.edu.au, John.Hearn@sydney.edu.au, Ann.Brewer@sydney.edu.au, Gwynnyth.Llewellyn@sydney.edu.au, Kathryn.Refshauge@sydney.edu.au, Chris.Peck@sydney.edu.au, Bruce.Robinson@sydney.edu.au, Jill.White@sydney.edu.au, chris.coffey@sydney.edu.au, debbie.bowman@sydney.edu.au, tim.payne@sydney.edu.au, andre.w.potter@sydney.edu.au, rebecca.murray@sydney.edu.au, jane.oakeshott@sydney.edu.au, meryl.bradford@sydney.edu.au, vc.admin@sydney.edu.au, kim.bellanderson@sydney.edu.au, helen.agus@sydney.edu.au, tony.weiss@sydney.edu.au, a.weiss@usyd.edu.au, soumela.amanatidis@sydney.edu.au, margaret.allmanfarinelli@sydney.edu.au, jain.campbell@sydney.edu.au, dee.carter@sydney.edu.au, ian.caterson@sydney.edu.au, charles.collyer@sydney.edu.au, arthur.conigrave@sydney.edu.au, stuart.cordwell@sydney.edu.au, ben.crossett@sydney.edu.au, gareth.denyer@sydney.edu.au, tom.ferenci@sydney.edu.au, k.downard@sydney.edu.au, mitchell.guss@sydney.edu.au, vanessa.gysbers@sydney.edu.au, ruth.hall@sydney.edu.au, dale.hancock@sydney.edu.au, hush_n@chem.usyd.edu.au, noel.hush@sydney.edu.au, jill.johnston@sydney.edu.au, katherine.jukic@sydney.edu.au, philip.kuchel@sydney.edu.au, vincy.li@sydney.edu.au, tim.newsome@sydney.edu.au, margaret.nicholson@sydney.edu.au, hannah.nicholas@sydney.edu.au, anna.rangan@sydney.edu.au, reeves@angis.usyd.edu.au, peter.reeves@sydney.edu.au, margaret.sunde@sydney.edu.au, s.truswell@mm.b.usyd.edu.au, peter.waterhouse@usyd.edu.au, peter.waterhouse@sydney.edu.au

Good afternoon Professor Trehwella (and outside observers),

Thanks for your latest note. Unfortunately, it did not even touch on the substance of this dispute. Again, this is not about "differences in interpretation", this is about obvious factual errors that need to be corrected (Slides 9 and 10).

I suggest that you look at the hard facts, Professor Trehwella, and not keep pretending that the peer-review process in this case was competent, if it existed at all (Slide 36). As before, the relevant facts of this matter are set out in great detail in this presentation: <http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/AUSTRALIAN-PARADOX-101-SLIDESHOW.pdf>.

I'm interested in your reference to "internationally accepted standard practice". I'm wondering, is it "internationally accepted standard practice" in science for the influential lead author also to be the "Guest Editor" in charge of quality control for the "Special Issue" of the journal in which their paper is published? And I'm thinking, as [Dr Evil in] Austin Powers once said of his childhood: "Pretty standard really".

Is it also "internationally accepted standard practice" for serious universities to publish and then defend obviously faulty papers that have become a menace to public health? (Slides 9, 10, 36 and 46)

If I am reading you correctly, Professor Trehwella, I think taxpayers may see it as unreasonable for the University of Sydney to be contracting out its research quality control to a pay-as-you-publish [sic] E-journal that has demonstrated obvious negligence in that process.

With great respect, my advice to you and your senior colleagues, Professor Trehwella, is to look carefully at the facts of this matter, so that none of us need waste too much more time on this dispute. My assessment is that most reasonable observers - and there are growing numbers of those - see the University of Sydney as having no credible defence for the serious errors published in *Australian Paradox* (and documented in Slides 9 and 10). Ultimately these errors will be corrected, I forecast.

This is not complicated matter, Professor Trehwella. Serious factual errors in papers repeatedly launched by publicly funded scientists into the public debate - especially on the topic of "diabetes", the greatest public-health issue of our time - should be corrected. Full stop. I'm surprised you are keen to dispute that fact.

If the University of Sydney has no real interest in academic or scientific integrity of the research published under its banner of credibility, Professor Trehwella, then please just say so and we can jump to the next leg of this discussion.

In the meantime, I'm guessing that you did not warm to the idea of cup of tea over which to discuss this matter next week.

rgds,
rory

6. UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY DEPUTY VICE CHANCELLOR'S FINAL RESPONSE TO RR

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Jill Trehwella** <jill.trehwella@sydney.edu.au>

Date: Thu, Sep 13, 2012 at 3:09 PM

Subject: RE: Another feisty back and forth... Re: University of Sydney's stern response to RR, RR's response to University of Sydney

To: rory robertson <strathburnstation@gmail.com>

Cc: vice.chancellor@sydney.edu.au, dvc.provost@sydney.edu.au, chair.academicboard@sydney.edu.au, stephen.simpson@sydney.edu.au, Michael.Spence@sydney.edu.au, Stephen.Garton@sydney.edu.au, Derrick.Armstrong@sydney.edu.au, Shane.Houston@sydney.edu.au, John.Hearn@sydney.edu.au, Ann.Brewer@sydney.edu.au, Gwynnyth.Llewellyn@sydney.edu.au, Kathryn.Refshauge@sydney.edu.au, Chris.Peck@sydney.edu.au, Bruce.Robinson@sydney.edu.au, Jill.White@sydney.edu.au, chris.coffey@sydney.edu.au, debbie.bowman@sydney.edu.au, tim.payne@sydney.edu.au, andre.w.potter@sydney.edu.au, rebecca.murray@sydney.edu.au, jane.oakeshott@sydney.edu.au, meryl.bradford@sydney.edu.au, vc.admin@sydney.edu.au, kim.bellanderson@sydney.edu.au, helen.agus@sydney.edu.au, tony.weiss@sydney.edu.au, a.weiss@usyd.edu.au, soumela.amanatidis@sydney.edu.au, margaret.allmanfarinelli@sydney.edu.au, jain.campbell@sydney.edu.au, dee.carter@sydney.edu.au, ian.caterson@sydney.edu.au, charles.collyer@sydney.edu.au, arthur.conigrave@sydney.edu.au, stuart.cordwell@sydney.edu.au, ben.crossett@sydney.edu.au, gareth.denyer@sydney.edu.au, tom.ferenci@sydney.edu.au, k.downard@sydney.edu.au, mitchell.guss@sydney.edu.au, vanessa.gysbers@sydney.edu.au, ruth.hall@sydney.edu.au, dale.hancock@sydney.edu.au, hush_n@chem.usyd.edu.au, noel.hush@sydney.edu.au, jill.johnston@sydney.edu.au, katherine.jukic@sydney.edu.au, philip.kuchel@sydney.edu.au, vincy.li@sydney.edu.au, tim.newsome@sydney.edu.au, margaret.nicholson@sydney.edu.au, hannah.nicholas@sydney.edu.au, anna.rangan@sydney.edu.au, reeves@angis.usyd.edu.au, peter.reeves@sydney.edu.au, margaret.sunde@sydney.edu.au, s.truswell@mm.b.usyd.edu.au, peter.waterhouse@usyd.edu.au, peter.waterhouse@sydney.edu.au

Dear Rory:

I have nothing to add to my previous emails and the University does not intend to engage in any further correspondence with you.

Sincerely,
Jill Trehwella

7. RR'S FINAL RESPONSE TO PROFESSOR TREWHELLA

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **rory robertson** <strathburnstation@gmail.com>

Date: Thu, Sep 13, 2012 at 3:18 PM

Subject: Re: Another feisty back and forth... Re: University of Sydney's stern response to RR, RR's response to University of Sydney

To: Jill Trehwella <jill.trehwella@sydney.edu.au>

fair enough, Professor Trehwella. but i expect that you will be hearing a great deal more on this matter, whether the University of Sydney engages with me or not. there are a growing number of serious people across Australia - including in Canberra - who are rather concerned about the University's position on this matter. the errors in that sloppy paper should have been corrected months ago.

anyway, this is not personal. i simply am seeking to have those obvious errors corrected. i apologise if i have annoyed you.

best wishes,
rory

--

rory robertson

[economist and former-fattie](#)

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