

Rory Robertson
20 April 2016

Request for formal retraction of infamous *Australian Paradox* paper

Dear members of the Senior Executive Group of the University of Sydney, and outside observers,

I'm sorry to have to write to many of you again about the Charles Perkins Centre's *Australian Paradox* scandal. I will try to be brief, providing the relevant history and a four-point argument for the formal retraction of the infamous paper:

<http://sydney.academia.edu/AlanBarclay> ; <http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/OriginalAustralianParadoxPaper.pdf>

For starters, note that an **ABC Lateline report** last week confirmed my assessment that the paper is extraordinarily faulty, has false conclusions and works to damage public health: <http://www.abc.net.au/lateline/content/2015/s4442720.htm>

As I explained in 2014 to the Academic Board - which did not reply - Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) Professor Jill Trehwella's "Initial Inquiry" into this matter was an epic fail, with the **Initial Inquiry Report wrong on five of its seven "Preliminary Findings of Fact"**: <http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/Letter-Academic-Board-Inquiry-Report.pdf>

Disturbingly, Professor Trehwella and her hand-picked independent investigator Professor Robert Clark AO combined to **blatantly "bury"** the fact that the *Australian Paradox* paper features a **faked, falsified, made-up flat line**. Call it whatever you like, but please check out **Figure 6** (p.5 below). The suppression of the fake-data issue is "**PROBLEM 1**" in my response to the mistake-riddled *Initial Inquiry Report*: <http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/RR-response-to-inquiry-report.pdf>

Further, Professor Trehwella and Professor Clark combined "**not to notice**" that the authors' own published charts of valid indicators - reproduced on the next three pages - **spectacularly contradict** the author's mistaken claim of "**a significant and substantial decline**" in the consumption of added sugar over their chosen 1980-2010 timeframe.

Notably, the University of Sydney refused to forward my detailed response to Professor Clark, inappropriately declaring case-closed. But facts remain facts despite being suppressed. Thus **Emma Albericic's Lateline investigation shredded the credibility of the *Australian Paradox* paper**, reinforcing similar assessments since 2012 by other experienced journalists:

Wendy Carlisle <http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/backgroundbriefing/2014-02-09/5239418> ;

Michael Pascoe <http://www.smh.com.au/business/pesky-economist-wont-let-big-sugar-lie-20120725-22pru.html> ; and

Mark Metherell <http://www.smh.com.au/national/health/research-causes-stir-over-sugars-role-in-obesity-20120330-1w3e5.html>

Shockingly, the Charles Perkins Centre's Professor Brand-Miller reportedly told *Lateline* that her *Australian Paradox* findings are "**more valid than ever**". I think this is scientific fraud, and so does a former Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank of Australia: p. 35 <http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/22Slideshowaustraliangoestoparadoxcanberrafinal.pdf>

Unreasonably, since 2012, the University of Sydney's scientists and management have falsely claimed everything is fine:

"Dear Mr Robertson

I have received your e-mail of 24 May [2012].

On the advice available to me the report of Professor Brand-Miller's research which appears in *Nutrients* was independently and objectively peer-reviewed prior to its publication in that reputable journal.

In that circumstance there is no further action which the University can or should take in relation to your concerns.

Yours sincerely

Michael Spence

DR MICHAEL SPENCE | Vice-Chancellor and Principal UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY"

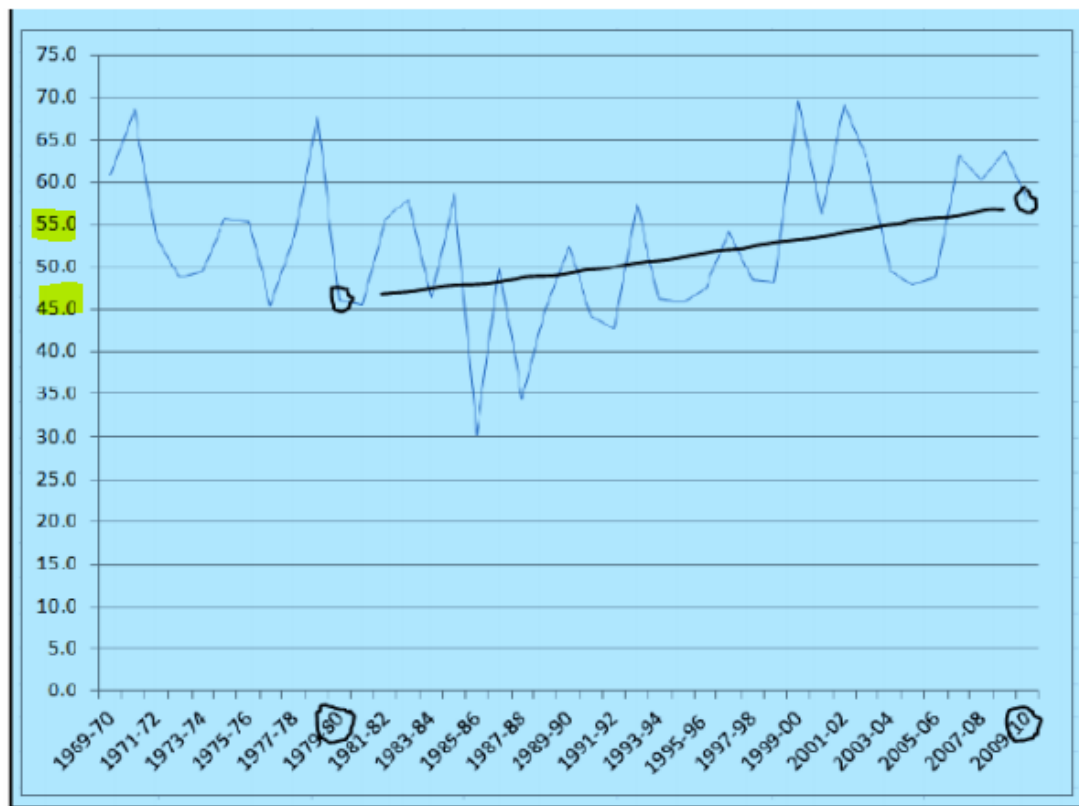
<http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/SydneyUniVC%20LETTER070612.pdf>

In fact, any "peer review" of the *Australian Paradox* paper was a catastrophic failure. Indeed, as was made clear by my **Charles Perkins Centre Quick quiz on research integrity**: <http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/quickquizresearch.pdf>, no-one competent read the paper before it was (self) published by Professor Brand Miller, **operating as lead author as well as the Guest Editor** of the publishing journal: http://www.mdpi.com/journal/nutrients/special_issues/carbohydrates

The next four pages reproduce the authors' own *Australian Paradox* charts, followed by my four-point case for retraction.

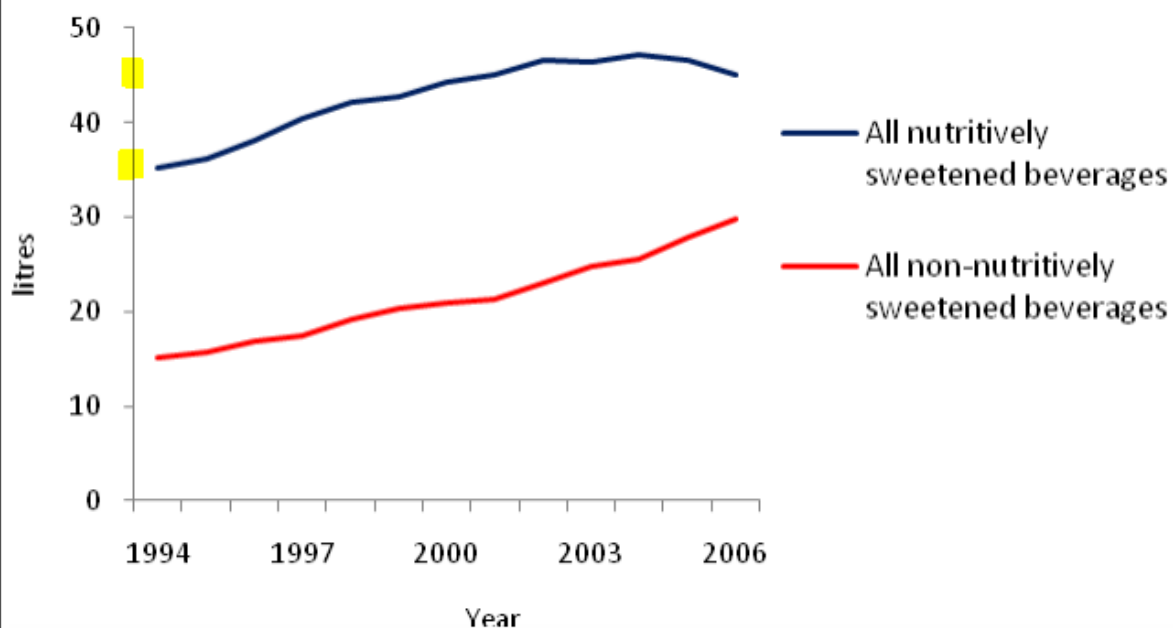
Charles Perkins Centre's graphic evidence of "consistent and substantial decline", 1980-2010

**Figure 1: Australian sugar availability
(kg per person per year)**



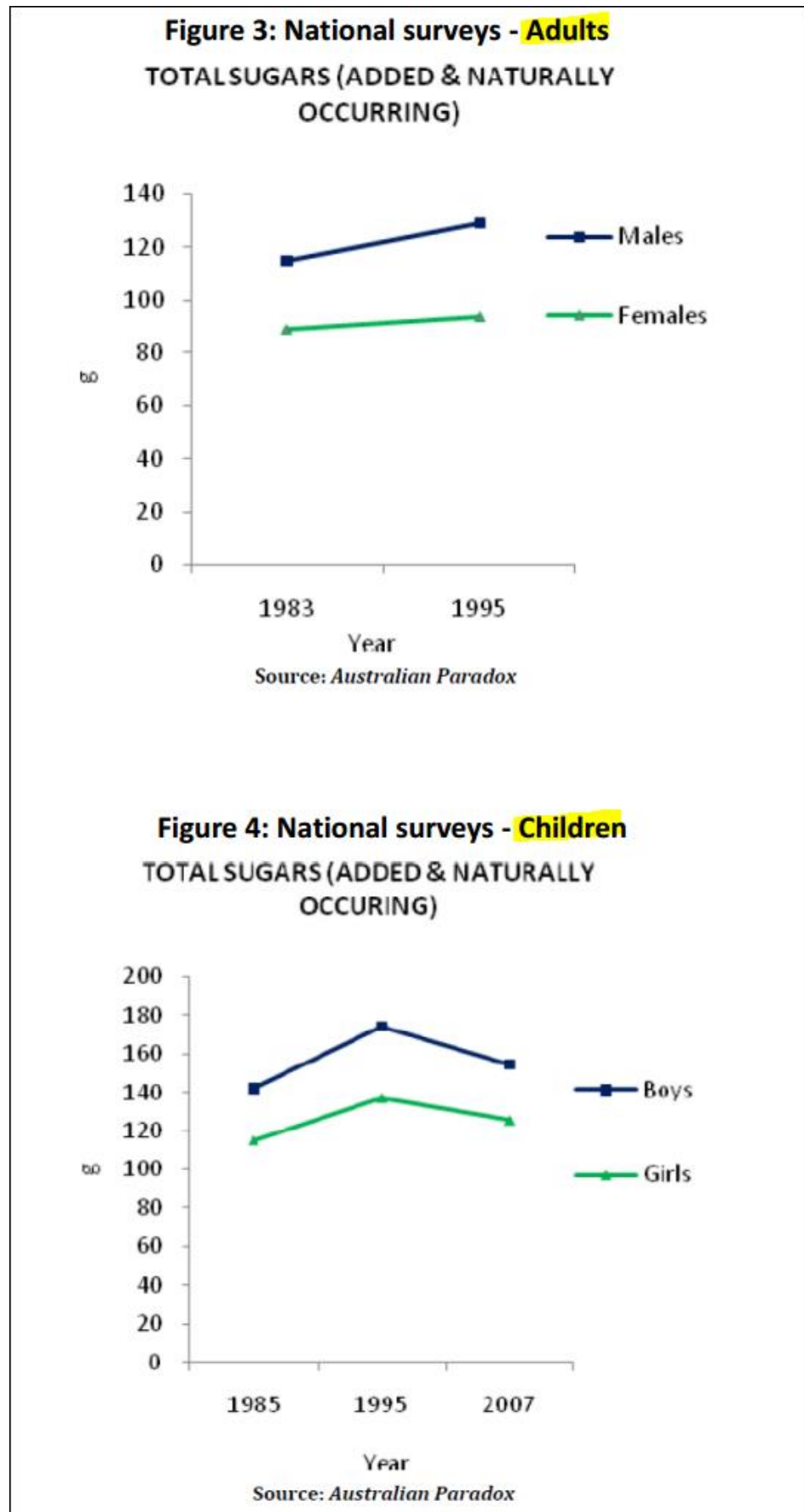
Source: *Australian Paradox Revisited* ; My "trend" for "the past 30 years"

**Figure 2: Australian softdrink sales; Top (dark) line is sugary softdrinks
(Litres per person per year)**



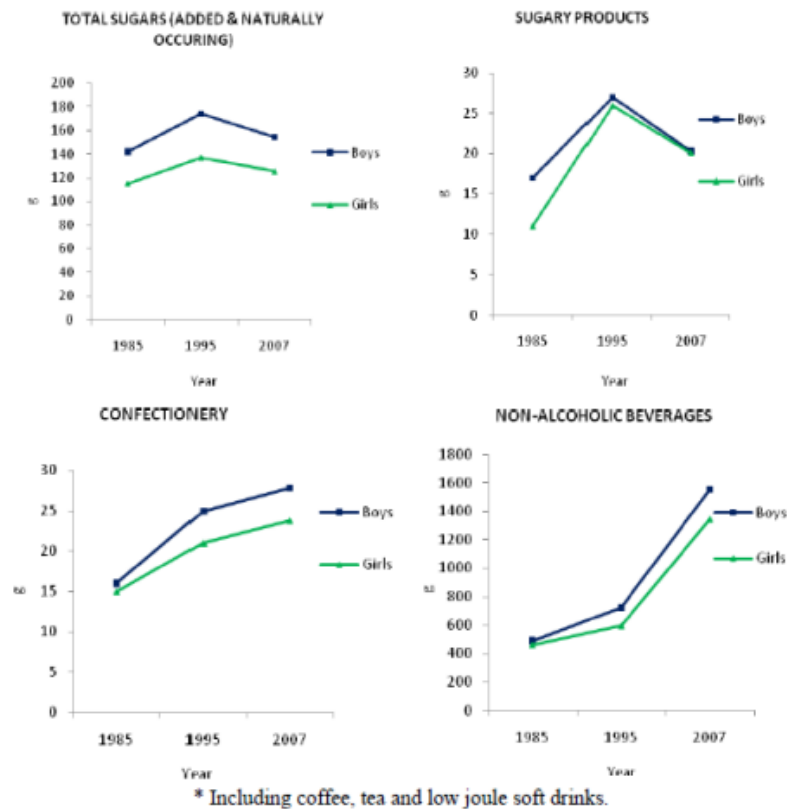
Source: *Australian Paradox*

Charles Perkins Centre's graphic evidence of "consistent and substantial decline", 1980-2010
(continued)



Charles Perkins Centre's graphic evidence of "consistent and substantial decline", 1980-2010
(continued)

Figure 4a: National surveys - **Children**



Source: Australian Paradox

Figure 5: Australian sugar industry's measure of sugar consumption

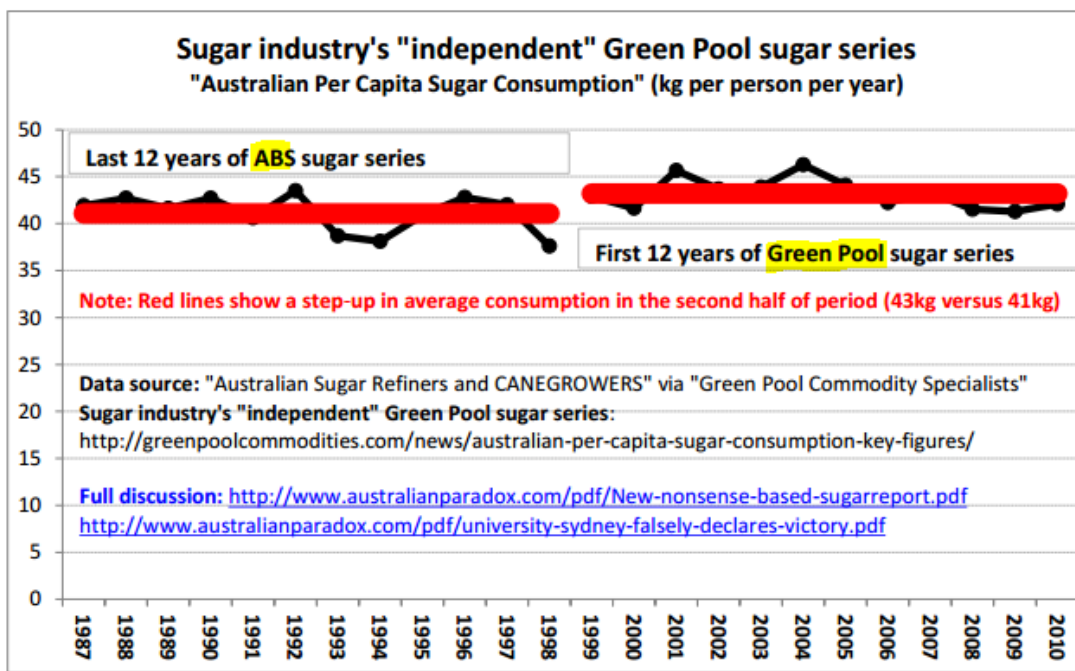
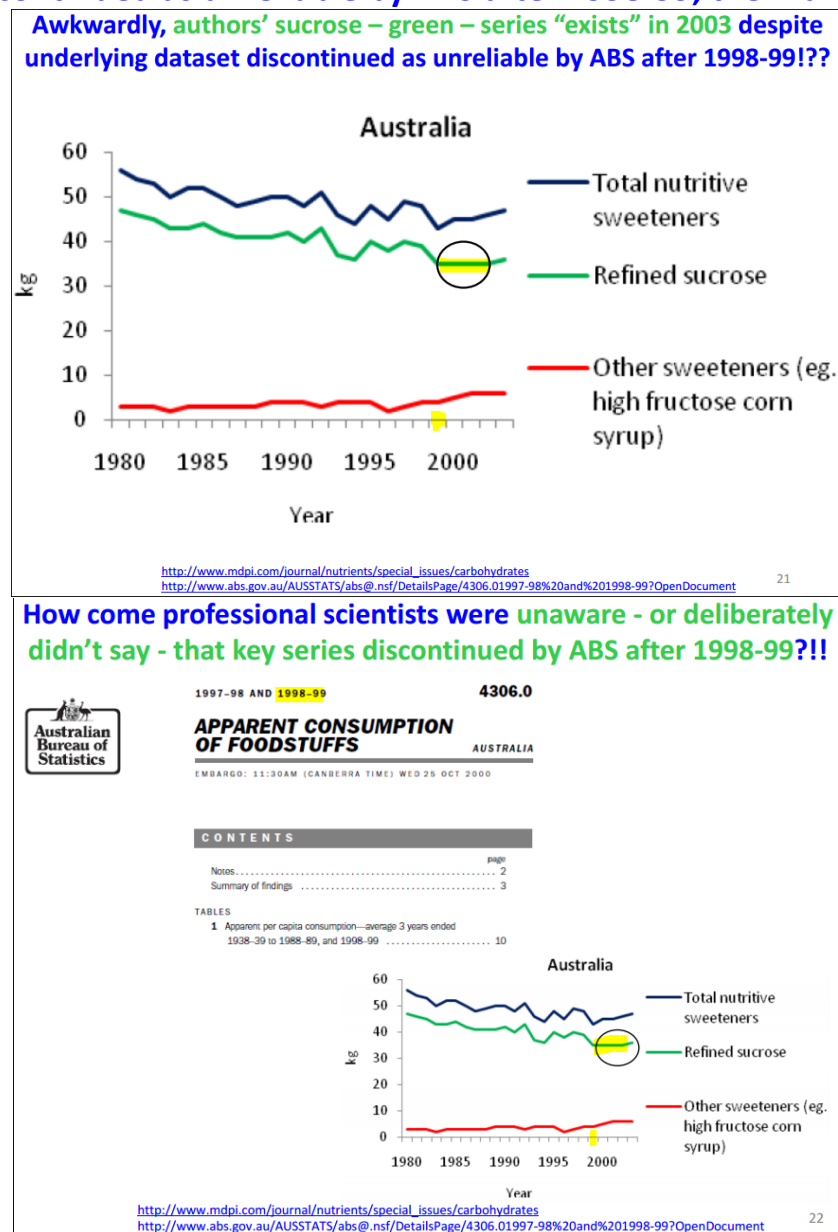


Figure 6: Data discontinued as unreliable by ABS after 1998-99, then faked by FAO to 2003



<http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/22Slideshowaustraliangoestoparadoxcanberrafinal.pdf>

Figure 7: FAO confirms that it invented conspicuous dead-end flat line, based on nothing real

From: **MorenoGarcia, Gladys (ESS)** <Gladys.MorenoGarcia@fao.org>
 Date: Mon, Feb 13, 2012 at 9:43 PM
 Subject: FW: quick question on basic Australian sugar data
 To: "strathburnstation@gmail.com" <strathburnstation@gmail.com>
 Cc: "Rummukainen, Kari (ESS)" <Kari.Rummukainen@fao.org>

Dear Rory

The "apparent consumption" or better 'food availability' can be found under Faostat Food Supply or Food Balance Sheet domains up to year 2007.

Food supply
<http://faostat.fao.org/site/345/default.aspx>
 Food balance sheet
<http://faostat.fao.org/site/354/default.aspx>

In the case of Australia I have looked at the time series and there is some food of Sugar & syrups nes and Sugar confectionary the biggest amounts are under Refined Sugar where data is with symbol * but it is calculated with following note:

calc. on 37 kg. per cap. as per last available off. year level (1999)
 The figure for 1999 and for earlier years come from; ABS - APP. CONS. OF FOODSTUFFS.

Regards
 Gladys C. Moreno G.
 Statistician
 C-428
 Statistics Division
 Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

Letter 4 in <http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/FAOfalsifiedsugar.pdf>

Importantly, the University of Sydney should be accountable to taxpayers. It should fix the research misconduct of its Charles Perkins Centre staff. I highlight four main reasons why the *Australian Paradox* paper should be formally retracted.

ONE: The *Australian Paradox* scandal is an academic disgrace; indeed, the persistent incompetence and worse since 2012 appear to represent strong evidence that the University of Sydney and thus the Group of Eight (Go8) universities are defrauding taxpayers on a massive scale. Please let me explain. First, the University of Sydney and its Go8 partners solicit research and other funding from taxpayers by claiming to be devoted to "**excellence in research**", that they are "**citadels of ability and excellence**", that the way "research intensive universities" operate "**ensures the highest possible standards of performance**", and that "**the reputations of these universities reflect substance, not public relations**". (Ironically, that's all from a Go8 marketing document! <https://go8.edu.au/sites/default/files/docs/role-importanceofresearchunis.pdf>) Then, after draining hundreds of millions - even billions - of dollars from taxpayers' pockets, it turns out that the University of Sydney and the Go8 provide no competent quality control *when it matters*. Instead, they prioritise "academic freedom" over academic competence, scientific integrity and "excellence in research". Again, the fact that the *Australian Paradox* paper still is being promoted as factual four years after the University of Sydney was advised of the serious problems that invalidate its main "findings" - while the Go8 has happily harvested billions of taxpayer dollars via its misleading and deceptive claim of devotion to "research excellence" - suggests financial fraud on a massive scale. (Am I wrong? By the way, Dr Michael Spence heads both USyd & Go8: <https://go8.edu.au/page/go8-board>)

TWO: The ongoing *Australian Paradox* research misconduct - unreasonably promoting false information on the scientific record and in important public debates - is damaging public health by downplaying the harm caused by modern doses of sugar consumption. Sadly, several Charles Perkins Centre scientists continue to falsely exonerate added sugar in modern doses as harmless, despite it delivering misery and early death - via type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease (CVD) and obesity-related cancers - to everyday Australians, including especially the clans of Indigenous peoples for whom Charlie once fought so passionately. **Indigenous Affairs Minister Senator Nigel Scullion in February of this year observed: "I think particularly in remote communities and very remote communities sugar is just killing the population":** <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2016-02-12/scullion-says-sugar-is-killing-remote-communities/7162974> There is strong evidence to support the Minister's observation: pp. 12-16 <http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/obesitysummit.pdf>

It should go without saying that the Charles Perkins Centre should not be helping to harm those Charlie loved. Yet in 2015, Professor Brand-Miller - **instead of re-writing her paper** as recommended by Professor Robert Clark AO in July 2014 - <http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/backgroundbriefing/independent-review-finds-issues-with-controversial-sugar-paper/5618490> - **put the Charles Perkins Centre's name on the sugar industry's harmful efforts** to use her false *Australian Paradox* "findings" to mislead everyday Australians about links between sugar consumption and poor health: (scroll down) <http://www.srasanz.org/sras/news-media-faq/sras-articles/do-carbohydrates-cause-weight-gain/> So too, Professor Brand-Miller and Dr Alan Barclay's faulty paper is still, as you read, being used to assist the sugary drink industry's attempts to **kill the proposed "sugar tax" in Australia**: "Added sugar consumption declining..."; "The findings confirm an 'Australian Paradox' " <http://australianbeverages.org/for-consumers/soft-drink-tax-answer/>

Earlier this decade, in 2011 and 2012, Professor Brand-Miller, the University of Sydney Nutrition Research Foundation and the sugary products industries used the faulty *Australian Paradox* paper as **an intellectual spearhead** to try to kill the National Health and Medical Research Council's proposed toughening of dietary advice against added sugar: <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/health-science/a-spoonful-of-sugar-is-not-so-bad/story-e6fgr8y6-1226090126776> ; <http://www.smh.com.au/national/health/research-causes-stir-over-sugars-role-in-obesity-20120330-1w3e5.html> Notably, the University of Sydney has a **serious conflict of interest** in the debate on sugar consumption and public health, as it is the half-owner and operator of the Glycemic Index business that charges food and drink companies **up to \$6,000 a pop to put healthy stamps on sugar and sugary products**: <http://www.foodpolitics.com/2016/03/sugar-in-australia-its-better-for-you/> ; <http://www.gisymbol.com/nestle-malted-milk/> ; p. 5 [http://www.foodhealthdialogue.gov.au/internet/foodandhealth/publishing.nsf/Content/D59B2C8391006638CA2578E600834BBD/\\$File/Resources%20and%20support%20for%20reformulation%20activities.pdf](http://www.foodhealthdialogue.gov.au/internet/foodandhealth/publishing.nsf/Content/D59B2C8391006638CA2578E600834BBD/$File/Resources%20and%20support%20for%20reformulation%20activities.pdf)

THREE: Formal retraction is the standard scientific response to extraordinarily faulty formal papers with false findings that are damaging to public health. Over 500 "peer reviewed" papers are formally retracted each year, or about two per business day: (see comments) <http://www.the-scientist.com/?articles.view/articleNo/38743/title/Top-10-Retractions-of-2013/> ; <http://www.nature.com/news/set-up-a-self-retraction-system-for-honest-errors-1.19619>

In this case of the extraordinarily faulty *Australian Paradox*, the retraction process will require just a note from Go8 Chair Dr Michael Spence to the CEO of MDPI, the entity publishing that “reputable journal” *Nutrients*. I know the retraction process is simple because Dietrich Rordorf, the (then) CEO of MDPI, told me in 2013: “**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**”: (Comments) <http://retractionwatch.com/2013/08/22/journal-to-feature-special-issue-on-scientific-misconduct-seeks-submissions/> To assist, here’s my **draft Retraction Notice**: (in blue) <http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/RRsubmission2inquiry.pdf>

Looking back, it was highly irregular for Professor Robert Clark AO to recommend that Professor Brand-Miller and Dr Barclay re-write their faulty paper – “**This new paper should be written in a constructive manner that respects issues relating to the data raised in the Australian Paradox paper by the complainant [me]**” – rather than simply advise that it be formally retracted. In effect, he treated the authors as if they were underperforming undergraduates rather than professional scientists who had (self) published a faulty yet influential and harmful paper with false “findings” in a formal scientific journal. Moreover, it is troubling that Professor Brand-Miller and Dr Alan Barclay **responded disingenuously, pretending someone asked for an “update”** of their infamous paper rather than simply a correction of their clownish misrepresentations of the datasets shown on pp. 2-5 above: <http://sydney.edu.au/news/84.html?newsstoryid=13780>

FOUR: Unfortunately, the Australian Paradox paper is just the tip of a huge iceberg of incompetence or worse in nutrition “science” in Go8 universities. For example, three highly influential Charles Perkins Centre scientists - Professor Stephen Colagiuri, Dr Alan Barclay and Professor Jennie Brand-Miller - make the ludicrous false claim in their Low-GI handbooks - including the one aimed specifically at diabetics and pre-diabetics! - that “**There is absolute consensus that sugar in food does not cause [type 2] diabetes**”: (scroll down) <http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/diabetes.pdf> Of course, I wouldn't mind the Charles Perkins Centre's Low-GI crew writing dodgy diet books that have sold more than **four million copies** if the GI range of books were not presented as factual, and if the University of Sydney did not endorse their harmful false information, allowing its name and branding on the books' covers to help sales. For me, extremely troubling also is the fact that the Charles Perkins Centre's pro-sugar incompetence has made its way directly into Canberra's efforts supposed to prevent type 2 diabetes. In particular, Professor Stephen Colagiuri - a distinguished Low-GI co-author of that reckless “absolute consensus” claim - had a major influence on the **Australian National Diabetes Strategy 2016-2020**. That is, the basics of his September 2014 *Case for Action proposal: A Comprehensive Type 2 Diabetes Prevention Program* https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/files/nhmrc/file/research/research_translation_faculty/rtf/cfa_diabetes_nhmrc_150320.pdf became [https://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/3AF935DA210DA043CA257EFB000D0C03/\\$File/Australian%20National%20Diabetes%20Strategy%202016-2020.pdf](https://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/3AF935DA210DA043CA257EFB000D0C03/$File/Australian%20National%20Diabetes%20Strategy%202016-2020.pdf)

Obviously there is nothing wrong with writing a report about preventing type 2 diabetes. The problem is that the word “**carbohydrate**” (refined sugar is 100% carbohydrate) does not appear in either report in those links above. Not once, whereas the word “**metformin**” appears 23 times in the first document. This again is troubling, because the fact that **excessive consumption of carbohydrate** is the main driver of type 2 diabetes - with the elimination of that excess the obvious and effective cure - has been known to science and the medical profession for a century. This is documented in unambiguous fashion in my **1923 copy of the 9th edition of *The Principles and Practice of Medicine***: <http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/1923-Medicine-Textbook.pdf>

The Principles and Practice of Medicine was a widely used text for doctors across the western world a century ago. Back then, experts in the diabetes space advised patients to follow a **low-carb, high-fat (LCHF) dietary approach** that restricts diabetes-causing carbohydrates including refined sugar and grains, replacing them mainly with healthier dietary fat (see pp. 431 and 433). Until the 1960s, LCHF diets were the **standard and uncontroversial** approach to fixing obesity and type 2 diabetes: <http://www.peterbrukner.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/All-you-need-to-know-about-LCHF1.pdf>

So, if the elimination of excess carbohydrates is the most-effective fix for type 2 diabetes, why does that profound fact not get the slightest mention in the recently published *Australian National Diabetes Strategy 2016-2020*? Why do public-health entities like Diabetes Australia provide mistaken and harmful advice, including this: “Meals that are recommended for people with diabetes are the same [high-carbohydrate meals] as for those without diabetes”? <https://www.diabetesaustralia.com.au/eating-well>

Readers, why don't health authorities like Professor Stephen Colagiuri, Diabetes Australia and the Dietitians Association of Australia properly advise the simple LCHF approach that's been an effective cure for type 2 diabetes for over a century? I

do not know. But, as the world gets fat and sick, it's clear that the suppression of that profoundly important fact - that the excessive intake of refined sugar and other carbohydrates is the main driver of diabetes and obesity - is a **HUGE scandal**.

How could that even happen? Again, it's hard to know. Notably, however, according to their "Declarations of Interests", Professor Stephen Colagiuri and many of the careerists informing the rest of us about diabetes - via the NHMRC and Diabetes Australia, etc – tend to be part-time **agents for several pharmaceutical companies**: Appendix 2, pp. 27-33
https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/files_nhmrc/file/research/research_translation_faculty/rtf_cfa_diabetes_nhmrc_150320.pdf

ENDING THE HARMFUL MISTREATMENT OF OVERWEIGHT, OBESE AND/OR DIABETIC AUSTRALIANS

Readers, we need to clean up the mess that is modern nutrition "science", in an effort to reduce unnecessary misery for millions, and early deaths for many via type 2 diabetes, CVD and "Metabolic Syndrome" more generally. For starters, the University of Sydney and the Go8 should remove their blatantly false information from the scientific record, beginning with the formal retraction of the Charles Perkins Centre's harmful and extraordinarily faulty *Australian Paradox* paper.

If the University of Sydney and its fledgling Charles Perkins Centre review the situation and decide that their infamous paper need not be retracted, I **challenge** Vice-Chancellor Dr Michael Spence - or anyone else representing the Go8 - to appear on ABC TV (either 7.30 or *Lateline*, take your pick) to debate this critical public-health matter. In any case, if the University of Sydney does not retract the paper without further unreasonable delay, I will be writing to the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) and Australian Research Council (ARC) to recommend that all funding to Charles Perkins Centre researchers cease until we can again trust what currently are badly broken quality-control processes.

Readers, this is a big deal. Again, it is completely unacceptable for highly influential Charles Perkins Centre researchers to wilfully suppress the century-old scientific fact that excessive consumption of refined sugar and other carbohydrates is the main cause of type 2 diabetes, a malady driving widespread misery and early death in Australia, including for many in the remote clans that Charlie fought hard to protect: pp. 12-16 <http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/obesitysummit.pdf>

Finally, for the record, the **NHMRC's Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research** defines "research misconduct" to include: (i) "recklessness or gross and persistent negligence" (tick); (ii) "serious consequences, such as false information on the public record" (tick); and (iii) "failure to ...manage serious conflicts of interest" (tick): Sections 7 and 10 at http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/files_nhmrc/publications/attachments/r39.pdf

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

rory robertson

economist and former-fattie

<https://twitter.com/OzParadoxdotcom>

A life in our times: Vale Alexander "Sandy" Robertson (1933-2015) + Postscript on Death, Dementia, Diet and Diabetes: <http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/AlecRobertson-born2oct33.pdf>

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

Game-changer! 26 doctors treating fat and sick present strong evidence for why low-carbohydrate, 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> ; 37:00
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FcLoaVNQ3rc>

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>