

## THE SUGAR INDUSTRY'S FAILED ATTEMPT TO RESCUE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY'S AUSTRALIAN PARADOX PAPER

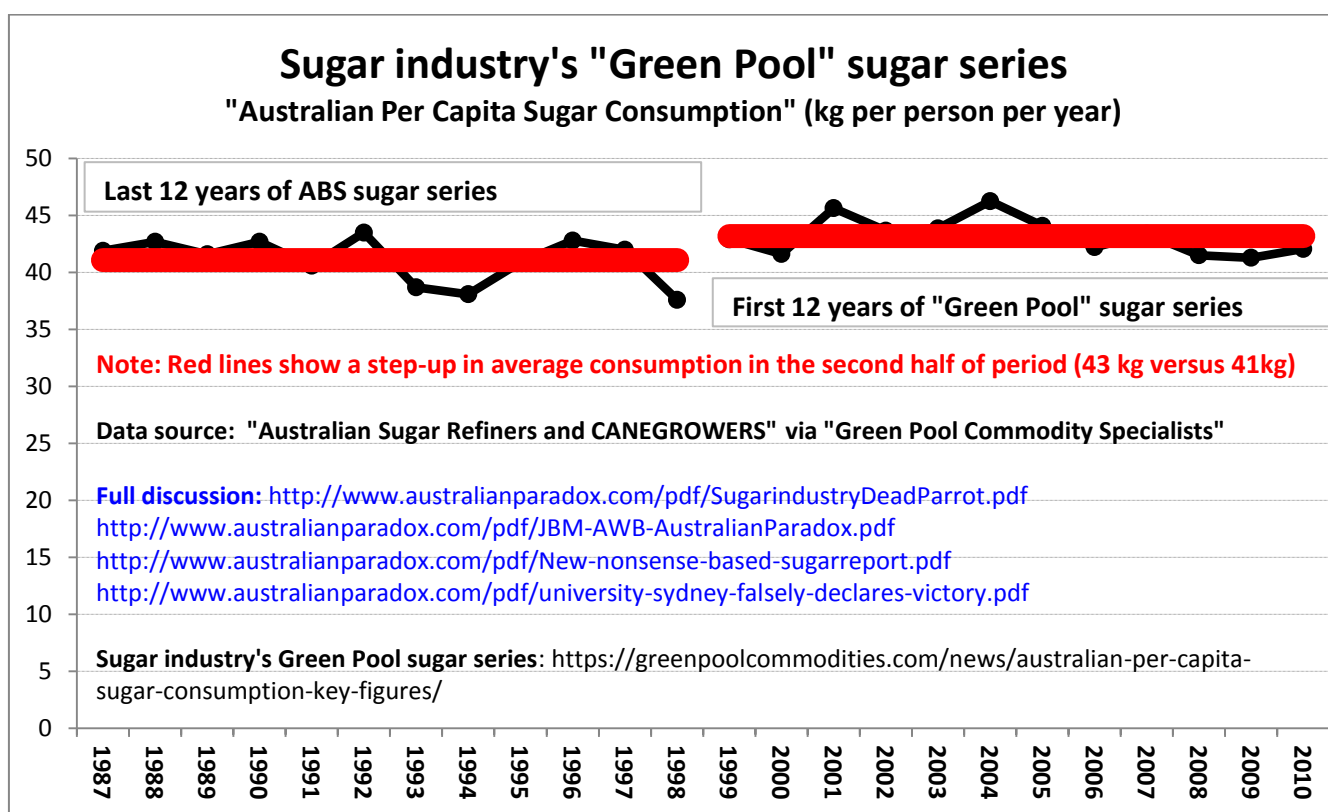
Once the University of Sydney has sorted out the serious problems in its residential colleges, it should turn its attention to the serious problems in its "nutrition science" areas. I highlighted concerns about the *Australian Paradox* scandal at the **Discussion on "The place of sugar in Australia's Dietary Intake Guidelines"**, Parliament House, Canberra - 29 October 2012. Here's my "Opening Statement":

<http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/23OpeningStatementinCanberrasugardebate.pdf>, and here's my "Australian Paradox goes to Canberra" chartset that seeks to summarise the disturbing facts of this matter:

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

To recap, the incompetent *Australian Paradox* paper claims to have documented "a consistent and substantial decline in total refined or added sugar consumption by Australians over the past 30 years" (to 2010), and so "an inverse relationship" between sugar consumption and obesity. As many readers now know, those ridiculous "findings" are **based on an ABS sugar series that was discontinued as unreliable a decade before the University of Sydney's "shonky sugar study" was published. So the "finding" is neither a puzzle nor a paradox, it's just a dumb mistake. But how was it published?**

Well, awkwardly, the lead author – who loved the paper – and the "Guest Editor" – who oversaw publication in an obscure but supposedly "peer reviewed" pay-as-you-publish E-journal – are the same person. What's that you say? Yes, that does sound cosy. Of course, in the history of the Universe, there would have been heaps of times when a pro-sugar low-GI advocate acting as Guest Editor told an influential lead author: "I'm sorry but I cannot publish **my** paper exonerating sugar as a health hazard because it is dominated by a series of serious errors that has resulted in an obviously false conclusion".



Ironically, the **sugar-industry commissioned, funded and "framed" Green Pool sugar series** (above) looks to have been **designed to rescue** the sugar industry's underperforming business partners (Slide 12) and their fraudulent paper, by extending to the present day the ABS sugar series that was discontinued as unreliable after 1998-99. **Too bad that a chart of the Green Pool series still shows that the trend in sugar consumption is flat/up over the past quarter century.** And, of course, that's consistent with the upward trends in four other separate indicators of sugar consumption, in the authors' own published charts (<http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/AUSTRALIAN-PARADOX-101-SLIDESHOW.pdf>).

That is, despite the disingenuous efforts of the sugar industry – and the University of Sydney's misrepresentation of the sugar-industry funded and "framed" Green Pool series as "independent" (<http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/JBM-AWB-AustralianParadox.pdf>) - the new "shonky sugar series" shows consumption to **be flat/up not down over the past quarter century. That completely contradicts the University of Sydney's fraudulent *Australian Paradox* claim of "a**

**consistent and substantial decline in total refined or added sugar consumption by Australians over the past 30 years". Yes, the University of Sydney should correct or retract its fraudulent *Australian Paradox* paper without further delay.**

Of course, the **nonsense-based** Green Pool series is invalid because it's based on the same 60-year-old methodology that **the ABS abandoned as unreliable after 1998-99 - after 60 years!** Similarly, the high-profile *Australian Paradox* paper's claim of a "consistent and substantial decline" in sugar consumption is a joke because it is based on the same ABS sugar series that was abandoned as unreliable a decade before the "shonky sugar study" was published with the lead author operating as Guest Editor. It's also a joke because many of us have been walking around with our eyes open since 1980!

Amusingly, the University of Sydney's high-profile low-GI advocates were unaware – **initially** - that the ABS series had been discontinued as unreliable, just as they were unaware of the ABS's reason for junking the series: the extreme difficulty of measuring sugar consumption accurately as the exercise shifted from counting bags of sugar to counting grains of sugar already added to tens of thousands of varieties of manufactured foods. And even now they will pretend to be unaware that the "independent" Green Pool series contradicts both their silly claim of a "consistent and substantial" 30-year decline in sugar consumption, and their silly false conclusion of "an inverse relationship" between sugar consumption and obesity. Eat more sugar, get thinner! Yeah, right! (<http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/New-nonsense-based-sugarreport.pdf> ).

Yes, the sugar industry sent Green Pool on a fool's errand: "...publish an updated set of statistics on sugar consumption in Australia using [abandoned] ABS methodology". So Green Pool's nonsense-based but completely "independent" update relies on the same broken and abandoned counting methodologies that the ABS had judged were outdated and overwhelmed. Or as Green Pool explained, unknowingly: "Virtually all factors have largely been left as per ABS calculation, since an update of all data would require a large scale study of both the composition of imports of food into Australia and representative food compositional data for imports and exports of all categories - which is no longer collected by ABS".

Yes, but a well-paid and "independent" fool's errand. Still, the sugar industry is happy to pretend that the stone-dead ABS series was "just resting", "stunned", "tired and shagged out" or "**pining for the fjords**": the sugar industry has "cleverly" sought to nail the ABS "Dead Parrot" sugar series back onto its perch. Yes, what a joke. But it's more clueless or fraudulent than funny. **In any case, I reckon Monty Python did it heaps better:** <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ClrBMt4eiRk>

**Meanwhile, both University of Sydney Vice-Chancellor Dr Michael Spence and Deputy Vice Chancellor, Research, Professor Jill Trehwella have personally vouched for the veracity of *Australian Paradox*,** claiming that the idiosyncratic author/editor deal was actually part of credible quality control process (#11, #19 at <http://www.australianparadox.com/> ). And that story too might be credible if it were not for the slippery, smelly fact that the *Australian Paradox* and *Australian Paradox Revisited* papers – and the authors' website designed to deflect my correct critique of their fraudulent paper (#26 at <http://www.australianparadox.com/> ) - remain dominated by basic errors and a spectacularly false conclusion.

**It is about time the grown-ups at the University of Sydney had a serious look at this matter and started to protect Australian public health – not to mention the University's reputation for competence and scientific integrity - from its underperforming low-GI advocates and their friends in the sugar and sugary food industries:**

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

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

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/health-science/a-spoonful-of-sugar-is-not-so-bad/story-e6frg8y6-1226090126776>

It's an outrage that the University of Sydney's fraudulent *Australian Paradox* paper has been used – with the full support of the highest levels of management at the University of Sydney - as a **false intellectual spearhead in the food-industry's successful attack on the National Health and Medical Research Council's Draft plan to toughen nutrition advice against added sugar**, the feature of its once-a-decade upgrade of our national dietary guidelines. It's a scandal this critical upgrade has been forced from 2012 into 2013, and perhaps into the never-never (<http://www.australianparadox.com/part-2> ).

**rory robertson**

**economist and former-fattie  
now fairly fructose free!** 😊

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## THE AUSTRALIAN PARADOX SCANDAL

- In the US, "Big Sugar" set out over half a century ago to scramble and mislead science on the links between modern sugar consumption and chronic diseases. Professor Fred Stare, head of Harvard University's nutrition department in the 1960s and 1970s, became America's "most public defender" of "modern sugar consumption" as harmless, his "science" corrupted by heavy funding from the sugar and sugary food industries: <http://www.motherjones.com/environment/2012/10/sugar-industry-lies-campaign>
- In Australia, the University of Sydney is home to our highest-profile academic defenders of added sugar in food as harmless: <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/health-science/a-spoonful-of-sugar-is-not-so-bad/story-e6frg8y6-1226090126776> ; <http://www.smh.com.au/national/health/research-causes-stir-over-sugars-role-in-obesity-20120330-1w3e5.html>
- The two University of Sydney "low GI" advocates and food-industry service providers who published the *Australian Paradox* paper - falsely claiming "an inverse relationship" between sugar consumption and obesity - also operate a "low GI" business that endorses particular brands of (low GI) sugar and sugary products as "healthy": p.10-11 of <http://www.gisymbol.com/cmsAdmin/uploads/Glycemic-Index-Foundation-Healthy-Choices-Brochure.pdf> The University's undisclosed "lowGI"/fructose conflict of interest and all other aspects of the dispute are documented in the "Australian Paradox goes to Canberra" chartset below.
- Since March/April 2012, the authors of *Australian Paradox* and *Australian Paradox Revisited* have refused to correct the obvious errors that dominate their papers. The dispute would end today - and we could be assured that scientific fraud is not an issue - if the University of Sydney nutritionists and food-industry service providers simply corrected the basic errors in their published papers, as they should.
- The sugar industry recently commissioned, funded - and "framed" - the results of a "new" Green Pool sugar series that took the *Australian Paradox* scandal to another level: <http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/New-nonsense-based-sugarreport.pdf> and <http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/SugarindustryDeadParrot.pdf>
- The University of Sydney enthusiastically but unwisely embraced that bogus "new" Dead Parrot series as reliable, and declared victory in the *Australian Paradox* dispute: <http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/university-sydney-falsely-declares-victory.pdf>
- Awkwardly, the sugar industry's preferred Dead Parrot sugar-consumption series does not show what its friends at the University of Sydney claim that it shows: <http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/SugarindustryDeadParrot.pdf>
- RR participates in *Discussion on "The place of sugar in Australia's Dietary Intake Guidelines"* at Parliament House, Canberra - 29 October 2012. Here's my "Opening Statement" and my "Australian Paradox goes to Canberra" chartset: <http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/23OpeningStatementinCanberrasugardebate.pdf> and <http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/22Slideshowaustraliangoestoparadoxcanberrafinal.pdf>
- Photos from the event can be seen at <http://multimedia.aapnewswire.com.au/search.aspx?search=public+discussion+sugar%26%28importdate%3E20121028%29&gallery=PUBLIC+DISCUSSION+SUGAR> (To be clear, the University of Sydney representative who participated is one of the good guys, a fine scientist.)
- **Yes, I am arguing near and far for the correction or retraction of the deeply flawed *Australian Paradox* papers and the bogus conclusion of "an inverse relationship" between sugar consumption and obesity. Please alert me if you find any factual errors or unreasonable statements in my analyses.**
- The University of Sydney management's disingenuous defence of the shonky paper's misrepresentation of key facts – it's refusal to concede any serious errors have been made and so its refusal to ensure they are fixed - is a disturbing aspect of the scandal, greatly reducing the confidence one can have in the University of Sydney's credibility and integrity on matters of science: <http://www.australianparadox.com/pdf/Sept2012-Conversations.pdf>