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The Bond Briefing

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RATIONAL EVIDENCE-BASED COMMENT FOR THE GENERAL PUBLIC & HEALTH PROFESSIONALS. WE SAY EXACTLY WHAT WE THINK

Fake News Headlines: "Low-carb diet linked to early death". **Book Review part 1:** Blueprint by Robert Plomin. **Resources:** Yuletide Gift Ideas; Rich Christmas Cake. **Recipe:** Apricot Bliss Balls. **Q&A:** Is Maca an Aphrodisiac? **From the Labs:** New Sunshine Effect on Brain; Gluten in Pregnancy linked to Diabetes Type 1 in Offspring; Dietary reduces Brain Inflammation; Probiotics Upset Colon Health. **Evolutionary Behavior:** Forager Sharing. **Viewpoint:** Nature rolling back Nurture. **Plaudits:** Diane Lewis; Margot Woodman. **Spreading the Word:** YouTube Videos – Population Studies; Mouth Flora not all bad.

Fake News Headlines

"Low-carb diet linked to early death"

So screamed headlines around the world. This one is from *USA Today*: <http://bit.ly/2JFGYeR>. They took their cue from a study published in *The Lancet* [1].

From that headline, the reader would immediately assume that we must give up on bread, potatoes, pasta and pizzas to stay alive. But they couldn't be more **WRONG!**

The researchers managed to use the term 'carbohydrate' without once mentioning 'starches' or 'sugars'. In fact they used it correctly in the technical sense of low in **ALL** carbohydrates **INCLUDING SALADS, FRUITS AND VEGETABLES**. But the press lazily assumed that the study was giving a free pass to pasta and pizzas. They even carried appreciative photos of them.

Secondly the research found only that "low-carb" diets rich in mammal meat and animal fat were harmful. In contrast, "low-carb" diets rich in seafood or plant proteins (e.g. nuts, sardines) had mortality rates **LOWER** (better) than average.

On top of that, in my view (and in the view of many other authorities) the study is riddled with flaws.

For a start, it is just a population study, the kind of study which Prof Ioannidis (see **Population Studies: Finding the Specks of Gold in the Mass of Dross**, [last month](#)) finds that is **WRONG** 80% to 100% of the time.

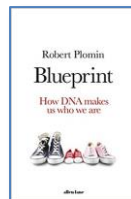
In addition the researchers:
a) Didn't distinguish between 'bad' fermentable carbohydrates (starches and sugars) and 'good' fruits salads and vegetables. > p3

Book Review – Part 1 of 2

Blueprint

How DNA makes us who we are

Robert Plomin [2]



In **Parenting**, *Deadly Harvest*, [Chap 8](#), page 214 [3], I wrote:

"In the words of cognitive scientist Steven Pinker, "All those differences among parents and homes have no predictable long-term effects on the *personalities* of their children. Not to put a fine point on it, but much of the advice from parenting experts is so much flapdoodle."

Pinker was drawing on studies of identical twins who had been adopted away, at birth, to different families. In spite of different parenting, twins' personalities and many other features remained the same.

Now, the eminent researcher of identical twins, psychologist and professor of behavioral genetics, Robert Plomin of King's College London, has written this seminal book.

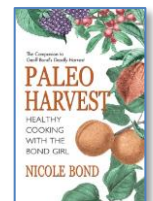
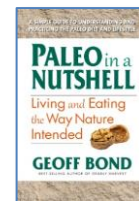
The science of genetic prediction has progressed by leaps and bounds in the 16 years since Pinker. These are some of Plomin's major findings:

- That genetic influences are caused by **THOUSANDS** of gene differences, each with very small effects acting in concert – a phenomenon called 'polygenicity'. That is to say, it's a fool's errand looking for 'the one gene' which is responsible 'for' a particular feature or disorder. > p3

Resources

Yuletide Gift Ideas

Are you stuck for a gift at the time of the winter festival? Think about our books – and feel good about helping your friends and relatives find their way to health and well-being!



Geoff's latest: a user-friendly guide to living the BondPaleo way

www.Paleo-nutshell.com

Amazon:

<http://bit.ly/2P-Nutshell>

Nicole's tasty, fully conforming BondPaleo recipes

www.Paleo-harvest.com

Amazon:

<https://amzn.to/2DpKjNN>

Rich Christmas Cake

Try this seasonal recipe from [Paleo Harvest](#):



Enlarge photo <http://bit.ly/2qSTFu2>

Yes, we did publish the recipe before, in [Nov 2014](#) [4], so here we just make it available for download here:

<http://bit.ly/2OSsoBE>



Recipe

Apricot Bliss Balls



<http://bit.ly/2T56A9o>

Yield: about 30 balls

150 g (5½ oz) dried apricots, soaked overnight in dark rum

100 g (3½ oz) almond flour

60 g (2 oz) raw cashews

60 g (2 oz) unsweetened shredded coconut

2 tablespoons lemon juice

1 tablespoon vanilla extract

1 tablespoon xylitol, or to taste

For rolling: unsweetened shredded coconut

1. Place apricots with rum in a food processor and process until finely ground.
2. Add all the other ingredients and process until mixture holds together.
3. Adjust sweetness with more xylitol if necessary.
4. Form small balls (about ¾-inch diameter) with your hands and roll in the coconut until well coated.
5. Store in your fridge.

Questions

Is Maca an Aphrodisiac?

Q. What do you make of this blurb for Maca root?

"Maca root, a natural aphrodisiac, is made for spicing things up in the bedroom. It is known to maximize athletic and sexual performance. But more importantly, maca boosts libido in both men and women. It's no wonder this super-root is called "nature's Viagra."

A. This is great copy to sell a product but it is grossly overblown. I gave my view in **Maca Root Update**, [Feb 2018](#) [5]. Some weak, small scale trials seemed to find a slight improvement over placebo in libido and sexual performance for both men and women.

However, another trial could find no improvement in all the usual markers of sexual arousal: "luteinizing hormone", "follicle-stimulating hormone", "prolactin", "17-alpha hydroxyl-progesterone", "testosterone" and "17-beta estradiol" [6].

My View? Maca is not a magical aphrodisiac, but it might modestly tweak sexual desire and function.

From the Labs

New Sunshine Effect on Brain

Sunlight exposure is known to improve mood, learning and cognition. However, it was not known what was going on.

Now some sophisticated research has discovered a previously unknown biochemical pathway [7].

Sunlight's ultra-violet (UV) raises levels of the compound 'urocanic acid' (UCA) in the blood. This UCA then gets through the blood-brain barrier where it enters neurons to help create 'glutamate' (GLU).

GLU is a big player in excitation of neural circuitry and is deeply connected with motor learning and recognition memory. It creates morphine-like substances resulting in an opioid-induced happiness-addiction for sunlight.

All this adds up to sunlight improving mood, cognition, sunlight craving and brain development.

My View? It is not for nothing that people instinctively seek out sunlight. We are learning little by little the extraordinary range of sunlight's effects on which we depend.

Gluten in Pregnancy linked to Diabetes Type 1 in Offspring

Over the years I have reported on a variety of studies which link wheat and gluten to type 1 diabetes. See: **Type I Diabetes linked to Wheat**, [Oct 2009](#) [8]. **Gluten Linked to Diabetes I**, [Dec 2013](#) [9]. **Type I Diabetes, Dairy, Grains and Antibiotics**, [Aug 2012](#) [10].

Now a huge Danish study finds that pregnant women with a high gluten intake (20g or more per day) gave birth to children who had **DOUBLE** the risk of developing Diabetes Type 1 (DT1) compared to those on the lowest intake (less than 7g per day).

The researchers opine it is known that gluten increases inflammation and it makes the gut more leaky. It also modifies the gut microbiome for the worse.

My Appraisal: This study has a number of drawbacks: it is only a population study; the pregnant women's dietary habits were obtained via food questionnaire (telephoned in to boot); and gluten intake was not measured directly.

Gluten intake was calculated from the intake of **GRAINS**: wheat, rye and barley in their usual forms of cakes, pastries, breads, pastas, pizzas, breakfast cereals and so forth. Even beer was included.

So, if there is a genuine association of Diabetes Type 1 with grain consumption, it could be due to **SOMETHING ELSE** in the grain. Apart from gluten, grains are loaded with compounds that create mischief: lectins, alpha-amylase inhibitors, trypsin inhibitors, alky-resorcinols and many more.

My View? In spite of the quibbles, this is just one more straw in the wind confirming that grains are not human food and are to be avoided.

Dietary Fiber reduces Brain Inflammation

As mammals age, immune cells in the brain known as microglia become chronically inflamed. In this state, they produce chemicals which impair cognitive and motor function.

That's one explanation for why memory fades and other brain functions decline during old age.

But, according to a study from the University of Illinois, USA, dietary fiber deficiency is a major cause [11]. See **Defining Dietary Fiber**, [Aug 2016](#) [12].

Dietary fiber promotes the growth of 'good' bacteria in the gut. When these bacteria digest fiber, they produce short-chain-fatty-acids (SCFAs), including one called butyrate (or butyric acid). Butyrate is known to have anti-inflammatory properties

My View? In this experiment mice were fed a diet rich in 'inulin', a 'soluble' dietary fiber. See: **All about Inulin**, [March 2011](#) [13].

Inulin is present in all plants but has its highest concentrations in onion,

bananas, garlic, asparagus, Jerusalem artichoke, and chicory. But we don't need to obsess about inulin as such – all dietary fibers, soluble and insoluble, play their role. And to get them – just eat up your conforming, non-starch plant food – and lashings of it!

Probiotics Upset Colon Health

“Probiotic” is the name given to live bacteria consumed with the intention of improving or restoring the gut flora. Often Paleo non-conforming dairy products such as yogurt and kefir are promoted on this basis. Also doctors often prescribe probiotics in capsule form – usually in an attempt to counteract the massive bacterial die-off caused by the use of antibiotics. Now a study casts further doubt on this practice [14]. It finds that, on the contrary probiotics, for many months, distort gut gene expression and prevent the recovery of normal flora. On the other hand, if left to itself, the gut microbiome returns to its normal state within days.

My View? As I have stated on numerous occasions, a healthy microbiome consists of **THOUSANDS** of bacterial species living in uneasy dynamic equilibrium. They need to be all there in the right proportions in order to work together in harmony.

One cannot second-guess this process by cherry-picking just one or even several species to dose oneself with. See especially: **Probiotics have Perverse Effects**, [April 2017](#) [15]

And also: **Kefir Ineffective as Probiotic**, [Sept 2009](#) [16], **Coho Coconut ‘Yogurt’**, [June 2013](#) [17], **Many Probiotics Taken for Celiac Disease Contain Gluten**, [May 2015](#) [18]

Evolutionary Behaviour

Forager Sharing

Foragers routinely, if grudgingly share their foods. The calculation is simple. You might have had a good day today and have surplus food to share, but tomorrow the boot might be on the other foot.

Even so, it was commonly assumed that in any human population, there is a spectrum of personalities from those who are generous to those who are skinflints.

However, a 6-year study of Hadza hunter-gatherers found something different [19].

Their new evidence shows that the Hadza are generally willing to share. But, that doesn't mean that they always do. In fact, whether a particular individual will share generously depends less on the individual and more on the group they happened to live with at the time. In other words, they adapt their sharing so as to match that of the group they currently live with. Says a researcher: “People do not have a stable tendency to cooperate and are, instead, influenced by those around them.”

My View? Evolutionary biologists find populations are composed of three main personalities.

- Suckers, who abide by the rules, but have no instinct to protect themselves against rule-breakers (cheats).
- Cheats, who find it easier to scrounge off the suckers.
- Grudgers who resist the cheats and are not suckers.

See: **Suckers, Cheats, and Grudgers**, *Deadly Harvest*, [chap 8](#) [20], p.206.

Hadza foragers seem to show that, in a state of nature, we all learn to be Grudgers!

Continued from Page 1

“Low-carb diet linked to early death”

So it is not surprising that people with **LOW INTAKE** of salads, fruits and vegetables have shorter lives!

b) Relied on participants' **MEMORIES** of what they ate.

c) Only recorded these memories twice: in 1989 and 1996! For the following **15 YEARS** they assumed that participants' diets remained exactly the same in spite of the rise and fall of fad diets, rocketing junk food intake, and the growth of, yes, Paleo and Mediterranean diets.

Other commentators find esoteric faults and sleights of hand with the statistical treatment of the data.

My View? The researchers defined a ‘low carbohydrate’ diet as one where carbohydrates provide less than 37% of calories. This is fine by us.

Following the forager template we aim at some 50% of calories from conforming carbohydrates which, of course, are non-fermentable plant foods like salads, fruit and vegetables. Oh, and by the way, the researchers have flagrant conflicts of interest. Co-author Walter Willett, for example, works closely with industry-funded groups, such as the International Carbohydrate Quality Consortium, which actively promotes carbohydrate [starch] consumption. He has also been a long-time advocate of a high-grain vegetarian diet and is a regular speaker on the vegan conference circuit.

Co-author Henry Blackburn is a committed defender of the USDA's Dietary Advice for Americans which promotes a diet low in fat and high in starches.

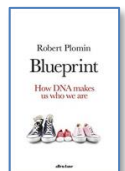
For further reading, this MedScape article is a very good rebuttal of the Lancet study: <https://wb.md/2Os3CYW...>

Continued from Page 1

Blueprint

How DNA makes us who we are

- Genetics is the major factor why people differ in personality, mental health and illness, and in learning and cognitive ability.



- Under normal, caring conditions, parents don't make much of a difference in their children's outcomes beyond the genes they provide at conception – and that includes qualities such as grit, altruism, kindness, conscientiousness and, to a lesser extent, religiosity and political leanings. Of course, extreme physical and mental abuse can traumatize a child for life but, even so, many will rise above it to become the person their genes foretell. More in Part 2 [next month](#).

- That how a person will turn out has high predictability at birth from a DNA sample – it is a great early warning system. Traits such as callousness, psychopathy, ADHD, schizophrenia, and other psychological phenomena have high predictability. See: **Nature rolling back Nurture**, page 4

[Next month](#) [21]: Part 2 & Conclusion

Viewpoint

Nature rolling back Nurture

The science of evolutionary human behavior has made a remarkable recovery from the low point of the 'Blank Slate' philosophy's heyday. That was when, from the 1920s onwards, social engineers wanted to believe that human behavior is "infinitely malleable." If necessary, they faked scientific studies to fit their prejudices.

Margaret Mead PhD, American cultural anthropologist and academic, was the most notorious example. Based on her PhD thesis, her book '*Coming of Age in Samoa*' was required reading in universities. In it she claimed that her research found that Human Nature is "the rawest, most undifferentiated of raw material." (See: **Social well-being and the idea of human nature**, *Deadly Harvest*, [Chapter 8](#), page 191)

It wasn't until 40 years later, that New Zealand anthropologist Derek Freeman, amid a firestorm of protest from the psychologist's establishment, unearthed and publicized Mead's fraud.

In the meantime, intellectually honest researchers, like Anglo-American psychologist Robert Plomin (see [Book Review](#), page 1) have battled decades to roll back the tide of psycho-babble, wishful thinking, and ideological zealotry.

Plomin started his work in the 1970s and, due to the hostile intellectual environment, had to work with small resources, and work below the radar. He says he could have written an early version of 'Blueprint' thirty years ago. "But thirty years ago it was dangerous professionally to study the genetic origins of differences in people's behavior and to write about them in scientific journals."

It is encouraging that, today, '*Blueprint*' has been well-received and that even the left-wing Guardian newspaper managed to do a grudgingly approving review.

It is a sad observation, also of human nature, that "men go mad in herds", to quote English thinker Charles Mackay, author of the 1841 classic: '*Extraordinary Popular Delusions and the Madness of Crowds*' [22].

We have a constant battle against entropy to stay vigilantly focused on the search for objective truth.

For a reminder, see: **Tyranny of the Minorities: Social Change Tipping Point**, and: "**Climate Scientists Give Science a Bad Name**", [July 2018](#) [23]

Plaudits

"Geoff, Your latest Bond Briefing, ([Sept. 2018](#)), is one of the best you've ever written. I really like the article on calorie restriction. Brilliant writing. Thank you!" - *Diane Lewis, CA.*

"Great briefings every month! I very much appreciate them, and read them cover to cover. Thank you ever so much, I really appreciate all your hard work you share with your readers!" -- *Margo Woodman, FL.*

Spreading the Word

EVENTS: <http://bit.ly/bond-event>

Talks to private organizations.

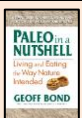
YOUTUBE VIDEOS:

Video where I speak this article from [#BondBriefing](#) September 2018: **Population studies - Finding the specks of gold in the mass of dross.**

It takes the vexed question of population studies and how they can be made to demonstrate almost any correlation between any lifestyle activity and any outcome. It draws on the inspiring studies of Prof John Ioannidis, MD of Stamford University, CA. <https://youtu.be/c4w5voi75M8>

Video where I speak the article from 10 Years ago, **Mouth Flora not all bad**, [#BondBriefing](#) September 2008: <http://bit.ly/2JxNQht>.

It raises the interesting question that mouth flora are probably an important factor in overall health and that we might be working against nature by using antiseptic mouthwashes. <https://youtu.be/2yK7CkUx-C-A>



Paleo in a Nutshell: Geoff's latest work encapsulates, concisely and easily, current thinking on living the way nature intended. www.paleo-nutshell.com



Paleo Harvest Cookbook: Over 170 delicious, Bond Precept conforming recipes www.paleo-harvest.com

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1 <http://bit.ly/2AO34sE>

2 Allen Lane, 2018, ISBN: 978-0-241-28207-6

3 <http://bit.ly/1vViUr7>

4 <http://bit.ly/2FpCvyw>

5 <http://bit.ly/2lkq5oQ>

6 *J Endocrinol.* 2003 Jan;176(1):163-8. Effect of *Lepidium meyenii* (Maca), a root with aphrodisiac and fertility-enhancing properties, on serum reproductive hormone levels, Gonzales GF.

7 Zhu et al., Moderate UV Exposure Enhances Learning and Memory by Promoting a Novel Glutamate Biosynthetic Pathway in the Brain, *Cell* (2018), <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cell.2018.04.014>

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14 - Niv Zmora. Personalized Gut Mucosal Colonization Resistance to Empiric Probiotics Is Associated with Unique Host and Microbiome Features. *Cell*, 2018; 174 (6): 1388 DOI: 10.1016/j.cell.2018.08.041

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