

**The Abuse of Science, Logic, and Authority
and the neglect of systemic thinking.**

“Nice” example: Coronavirus Lockdown

John Raven

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Re my attempts to promote discussion of the abuses of “science” (ie application of non-systemic, reductionist, science), logic, and authority through a discussion of educational research and policy*, it occurred to me that the reactions to the Coronavirus outbreak provide a wonderful example of these processes†.

1. As might be expected given our preoccupation with non-systemic, reductionist, the “Science” deployed in government portrayal of what to do about the virus focuses on a single outcome of the current policy (individual disease and death from the virus) and neglects other outcomes (death and disease from isolation; destruction of the economy; arrival of a police state). This is a classic case of pursuing non-systemic science.
2. Policy makers have focussed on the work of a single scientist (Fergusson at Imperial College) who is somehow known to them despite the fact that the conclusions drawn from his previous modelling work along the same lines have been shown by events to be seriously flawed.
3. There is no evidence of an attempt to carry on a general debate with scientists having alternative perspectives (alternative dominant concerns and alternative models).
4. The authorities have imposed a draconian set of measures aimed at that single outcome along the lines advocated by the chosen “scientific” authority. These draconian solutions directly stifle discussion of alternative points of view and the personal enactment of individual choices of alternative behaviours believed to be in the long term public interest.
5. Some members of the police have seized the opportunity to metaphorically and physically beat people up (a) because some authority has “told” them to do so and (b) because enforcing the rules has apparent moral basis.
6. The public, triggered by the fear that they may be one of the losers, and an apparently ingrained desire to impose what they believe to be good and right on others without considering the wishes of those others or the long term effects of their actions, combined with a predisposition to favour draconian fascist single-factor policies nominally promoting the common good, has jumped on the bandwagon and started clamouring for *more* restrictions and conformity whilst, at the same time, taking a delight in reporting their neighbours to authority for minor infringements of what are taken to be the regulations.

* Eg

1. Some abuses of “science”, logic, and authority illustrated from research relating to “Closing the Gap”. <http://eyeesociety.co.uk/resources/BPS%20Ed%20Sec%202019%20SHORT.pdf>
2. Social media, truth, social forces, democracy, and social research: The “scientific” manufacture of untruth and desolation ... and a possible cure
<http://eyeesociety.co.uk/resources/RC51%202019%20URBINO.pdf>

† There is no evidence that current strategies work from the point of view of reducing the impact of the virus. What there has been has been reliance on the outcomes of modelling provided by a particular group of researchers whose previous predictions have been seriously wrong. On the other hand, there is plenty

evidence of the devastating impact on the economy, including starvation and death both in this countries and externalised to eg Bangladesh. But my main concerns have been the absence of public debate, encouragement of contributions from others scientists, and the plunge into draconian policies over enthusiastically supported by most of the public and over enforced by police and other authorities.