STANDARD 4 PART SEMINAR.

In this seminar we will discuss:

THE RAVEN PROGRESSIVE MATRICES
THE NATURE, DEVELOPMENT, AND ASSESSMENT OF COMPETENCE AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATION
NECESSARY DEVELOPMENTS IN PUBLIC MANAGEMENT (GOVERNANCE)
SOCIOCYBERNETICS: TURNING PSYCHOLOGY INSIDE OUT

Part I will deal with the Raven's Progressive Matrices and Vocabulary Tests. The theoretical background to, and insights gained from research using, the tests will be discussed. Research into the sources of variance in test scores (such as education and ethnic origin), into the effectiveness of training programmes, and into the predictive validity of the tests will be reviewed. Among other things, the research discussed will cover the stability of the norms across cultures and their change over time. Particular attention will be paid to the misuse of tests. The most serious of these have to do with the role they play in contributing to a divided society which forces everyone to participate in the kinds of work that are destroying our habitat, thereby contributing to our extinction as a species.

Part II will summarise research into the nature, development, and assessment of high-level competencies such as initiative, managerial ability, and the ability to communicate effectively. Particular attention will be drawn to the huge variety of such competencies. A conceptual framework for thinking more effectively about, and recognising, these qualities will be outlined. Studies underlining their importance in organisations and society will be presented. Research into their origins in upbringing, education, and the workplace will be summarised.

Part III will deal with the developments which are needed in the educational system if such qualities are to be nurtured. Research further clarifying the nature of qualities to be nurtured and the barriers to doing so will summarised. Overcoming the barriers requires a pervasive climate of innovation. Generating such a climate depends on three things: (i) extensive "parallel organisation" activity; (ii) changes in the behaviour of public service managers; and (iii) a new, network-based, supervisory structure to monitor and facilitate the processes involved. Such a climate cannot be created via the kind of centralised prescription and checking procedures that have been elaborated over the past decade. It depends on the evolution of new governance/management arrangements. Some tentative insights into the requisite features of such arrangements will be shared.

In Part IV, the urgency of the developments briefly discussed at the end of Part III will be strongly underlined through a discussion of the impending ecological, social, and economic collapse. The role which the current financial and international governance systems play in promoting this will be described. However, analysis of why both the educational system and the wider society have developed in the way they have - which is widely recognised as dysfunctional - points to the operation of a network of invisible social forces which collectively determine human behaviour. These social forces are every bit as real as the invisible physical forces that control the movements of the planets and sailing boats. And they can be mapped, measured, and harnessed in an analogous way. The scientific domain concerned with doing this can perhaps best be described as sociocybernetics. One dramatic observation stemming from work in this area is that some 94% of behaviour in organisations is determined by these external forces and only 6% by the individuals. Much more important, however, is the insight that this network of social forces has the future of mankind and the planet in their grip. It follows that it is vital to map this network of social forces. This network can perhaps be categorised as Thanatosian as distinct from Gainian. It is hoped that it will be possible to persuade seminar participants to participate in this exercise. More specifically, this involves applying dynamic system modelling to the social forces involved in sustainability. The authors of Limits to Growth mapped the links between physical and economic resources but overlooked the, crucially important, social forces that determine what happens. A completely unanticipated outcome of our work in this area is that it points to the need for a major transformation in the way we think about the determination of human behaviour. This shift parallels that which Newton introduced into physics by showing that, if things moved or changed direction, it was mainly because they were acted upon by networks of external forces rather than their internal (animated) properties.

Relevant publications are listed on the reverse
RELEVANT PUBLICATIONS

PART I

Raven, J. (2002). Intelligence, Engineered Invisibility, and the Destruction of Life on Earth. Chapter 19 in Uses and Abuses of Intelligence
Teachers' College Record, 89, 21-38 Teachers' College Columbia University.

PART II


PART IV

Publications

Wikipedia entries for: John C. Raven, Charles Spearman, and Raven Progressive Matrices.

A more complete outline of this seminar and downloadable pdfs of many of the articles, or links to them, are available at www.eyeonsociety.co.uk.