

ESTABLISHING A 'SYSTEMS IDENTITY' FOR MANAGEMENT AND THE SOCIAL SCIENCES EQUIVALENT TO 'SYSTEMS ENGINEERING' IN THE ENGINEERING WORLD

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Abstract

This presentation will involve a discussion of some of the issues facing 'systems scientists' in the academic world in trying to better establish their 'systems identity' in commerce, business & social science faculties at universities or polytechnics (ie in tertiary sector educational institutions). The talk will draw on the author's own experiences at Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand over a nearly 30-year period, and his recent co-edited MDPI *Systems* journal special issue and book on 'systems education for a sustainable planet (with Prof Ockie Bosch). The book contains contributions from Australia, UK, Europe, USA et al, and these will be briefly discussed. In addition, the author will try and draw on lessons learned from his co-authored paper recently published in *System Dynamics Review* on 'a 'power and influence' political archetype: the dynamics of public support'. In that paper the focus is on how 'communities for purpose' build and lose power over time depending on a multitude of factors, some within control of the community and others outside the control of that community. If we consider the ISSS and systems thinking community at large as the 'community for purpose' we could begin to use the political archetype and concept model to help our community grow and build up momentum and influence over time helping to bring systems thinking knowledge and skills into the wider public arena over a reasonable timeframe (or before it is too late – eg from the adverse effects of climate change!). It is hoped that this approach will also add to the current 'systems literacy' projects being undertaken around the globe, including, for example, the theme of this conference and the project currently being curated by Peter Tuddenham at <http://www.systemsliteracy.com>.