



# laetus in praesens

Alternative view of segmented documents via Kairos

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## Monkeying with Global Governance

### Emergent dynamics of three wise monkeys in a knowledge-based society

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## Introduction

Worldwide broadcasts on 19 July 2011 provided an unprecedented four hours of coverage of a meeting of the [Select Committee for Culture, Media and Sport](#) of the UK Parliament -- interviewing those primarily responsible for the governance of the world's major [news organization](#). Through a subsidiary, this was recently implicated in a [phone-hacking scandal](#) of major proportions. Of particular concern to the Committee were the questionable relationships between that news organization, politicians at the very highest level, and the police force. The representatives had been summonsed to appear, having declined an earlier invitation.

It was recognized that the representatives of the news organization had been carefully briefed regarding their responses, especially since the scandal was the subject of several judicial inquiries. Their pattern of argument therefore merits careful attention in the light of its parallels to legal arguments in defence of questionable incidents in other arenas with implications for handling of information in relation to other forms of global governance. These include inquiries into the treatment of prisoners detained in relation to terrorism ([Abu Ghraib](#), [Guantanamo Bay](#), etc) and the inquiries into the widespread [clerical abuse of children in Catholic institutions](#). The development of insights here into a more general pattern, and its implications, is partially based on previous comment with respect to the latter case (*Humanitarian Disaster or Act of God -- Dangerous Implication in Practice?* 2011).

In commenting on the pattern of defence in all questionable incidents, this analysis uses the classic image of *The Three Wise Monkeys* as a metaphorical device -- hence the title. The three, and the associated proverb, are known throughout Asia and in the Western world. Appropriately they are used in commentary on corporate governance, as noted below -- raising questions as to the nature and implications of "monkeying around" as a framework for understanding misleadership (*Emergence of a Global Misleadership Council: misleading as vital to governance of the future*, 2007).

Together the monkeys embody the proverbial principle of "*see no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil*". To that end, one monkey covers his eyes, one covers his ears, and one covers his mouth. Occasionally a fourth monkey is variously depicted with the three others, symbolizing the principle of "*do no evil*". It is alleged that a notable exception to the lifestyle of non-possession of [Mahatma Gandhi](#) was a small statue of the three monkeys. Appropriate to the focus here on the information society, "*don't be evil*" is the informal corporate motto (or slogan) of Google (Pornpimol Kanchanalak, *Searching for the fourth monkey in a corrupted world*, *The Nation*, 21 April 2011)

It is especially noteworthy that the news organization implicated in the phone-hacking, the governments complicit in the questionable treatment of prisoners, and the religious institution with which child abuse was associated, all claim to be upholding the highest standards

-- and indeed are articulate in their claims to exemplify the defence of those values.

Rather than associating "monkeys" pejoratively with individuals, or focusing on the wisdom which the three together are held to represent, the question here is whether as "information functions" they can be used -- in the light of the cases cited -- to understand the forms taken by "monkeying" with governance on a global scale. This is especially relevant given the surprising degree of complicity between institutions of global scale. The approach might then enhance insight into how the subtle principle, represented by the three wise monkeys, together can be more effectively embodied.

In concluding with an indication of emergent patterns for a learning society, the personal implications of the argument for engaging "wisely" with "global" dynamics are highlighted in the light of previous concerns (*Psychology of Sustainability: embodying cyclic environmental processes*, 2002).

## Monkeying with governance of an information society?

As a preamble to the following argument it is useful to note the extent of the use of the "monkey" metaphor with respect to issues relating to governance. However it is the intention in that argument to extend the analysis using that framework, rather than to focus on specific cases or people.

That said it is appropriate to note that one of the most insightful commentaries on the unprecedented worldwide coverage of the interviews with the executives of the news organization made very specific use of the metaphor ([Roy Greenslade, \*News Corp's three wise monkeys knew nothing\*, London Evening Standard, 20 July 2011](#)). Greenslade is professor of journalism at the [City University London](#), who had himself been a senior executive at two [News International](#) titles in the 1980s.

The metaphor was used otherwise on the occasion of the [Oslo Sustainability Summit 2011: The Age of Stupid or the Age of Wisdom?](#) by [Catherine Cameron](#) (*The Three Wise Monkeys*, 2011) in a panel on: *Policy and Business -- What are Wise Strategies?* [see presentation [videos](#)]. Cameron is currently Director at [Agulhas Applied Knowledge](#), has been a part of the team behind the Stern Review of the Economics of Climate Change (2006) and is involved with the the Cambridge University Programme for Sustainability Leadership.

The wisdom of the three monkeys is cited with respect to issues of corporate governance and the behaviour of governors,, notably as evoked in response to commentary from Hong Kong (*The three wise monkeys of HK boards*, [Webb-site.com](#), 15 February 2011). Specific examples include:

- Leon Gettler (*Hiding a company's problems*, *The Age*, 2 March 2005): Mistakes happen. The question is what do corporations do when stuff hits the fan. Do they investigate what went wrong, or do they become the corporate equivalent of the three wise monkeys with a hear-no-evil, see-no-evil, speak-no-evil approach? (*Corporations that don't want to know*, *SoxFirst*, 23 August 2008)
- Garry Rogers (*Great Corporate Governance Starts with Capable Directors*, *Grahall*, 22 November 2010): In our experience, the best directors are more like supreme court judges - good questioners first; good listeners second. Unfortunately, some Boards seem to be the embodiment of the proverbial "Three Wise Monkeys," unwilling to recognize anything damaging or detrimental in the decisions and actions of management.
- Use of the framework has been used with respect to governance of cyberspace (Christopher T. Marsden, *Network Neutrality and Internet Service Provider Liability Regulation: are the wise monkeys of cyberspace becoming stupid?* *Global Policy*, 2, 1, January 2011).
- Tom Baxter, as lecturer in corporate governance in Tasmania, with its highly controversial timber industry, frames his presentation on freedom of information using the three wise monkeys -- but concludes that a "new generation of monkeys", digitally enhanced, is required for the future (*Stretching FOI Exemptions: properly protecting business or pulping the public interest?* 2009).

Various references are made to "unwise" monkeys, as in relation to the controversial [Darusman Report](#) (2011) on Sri Lanka for the UN Secretary-General has been the subject of commentary in terms of the monkeys (Tilak Fernando, *Three (un)wise monkeys and controversial Darusman Report*, *Lankaweb*, 16 May 2011). See also *Inside view: Three unwise monkeys: key questions to ask about your department's structure* (cigroup.org.uk, 4 September 2006). A classic example is that of William Oncken Jr. et al. (*Management Time: Who's Got the Monkey?* *Harvard Business Review*, 1 November 1999).

Preoccupation with problematic "monkeying" is widely evident, as for example:

- John Walker, *Monkeying with the Mainstream Media*, *fourmilab*, February 2008
- Carl Gardner, *Monkeying with national sovereignty*, *The Guardian*, 7 October 2010
- Aram Bakshian, Jr. *Monkeying With Gibbon's*, *The American Spectator*, 25 May 2011
- Jeremy Alford, *Monkeying with the Constitution*, *Gambit*, 14 June 2011
- John MacArthur, *Monkeying with the Meaning*, *Grace to You*, 2010
- Roger Highfield (*Marc Hauser: monkeying with the truth*, *The Telegraph*, 31 August 2010)
- Ralph R. Reiland (*Monkeying Around With the Economy*, *New American*, 16 August 2010)

The last example focuses on the fraudulent nature of the research conducted by evolutionary biologist [Marc Hauser](#) (*Moral Minds: how nature designed a universal sense of right and wrong*, 2006; *Evilicious: explaining our evolved taste for being bad*, 2011). Ironically he has argued persuasively that a universal moral grammar is wired into the human mind, similar to the universal linguistic grammar proposed by Noam Chomsky, as an explanation for our extraordinary facility with language.

Reference to "monkey" has been given a quite different twist, as reported by the [Centre for International Governance Innovation \(CIGI\)](#) in referring to the three monkeys in a New Zealand court case regarding alleged racist slurs ([Ramesh Thakur, \*Of monkeys and\*](#)

*kangaroos*, *The Times of India*, 1 February 2008). Thakur notes: "Indians and Australians will likely agree that the conduct of the International Cricket Council is that of the three monkeys who see, hear or do no evil. Where they disagree is what the "evil" and who the evil-doer is".

Three monkeys



## See no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil

The representatives in the three cases cited (news organization, religious institution, government) pride themselves on their efforts to recognize "evil" elsewhere in various forms and to be vigorous in their efforts to combat it. However, common to the three cases, is that those responsible at the highest level are also vigorous in their claim, with respect to "evil" within their own organization, to have:

- **seen nothing:** in that they were never exposed to any incidents or documents relating to problematic behaviour within their organization
- **heard nothing:** in that they never received verbal reports of significant problematic behaviour within their organization
- **said nothing:** in that they questioned no one with respect to the extent of any potential problematic behaviour, and issued no directives to investigate the matter further (especially since they had seen nothing and heard nothing)

In each case they rely on outsiders to present hard "evidence" on which they assert to have then acted vigorously. The difficulty in each case with respect to such "evidence" is that:

- evidence presented is considered irrelevant (and minimized) unless the presentation is itself made externally with sufficient force in such a way as to call into question the responsibility and responsiveness of the institution
- every effort is made to challenge the credibility of the presenter of that information and the validity of the information, as documented by Naomi Oreskes and Erik M. Conway (*Merchants of Doubt: how a handful of scientists obscured the truth on issues from tobacco smoke to global warming*, 2010).
- on accepting the probable validity of the evidence, every effort is made to associate it with an isolated incident or a "rotten apple" within the institution
- consideration may be given to compensating ("bribing") those who had suffered from any inappropriate actions (as with selected phone-hacking cases or selected cases of sexual abuse), or to those holding such evidence, in order to avoid further consequences. By conceding liability, it can then be argued that there is little left to dispute, other than an appropriate level of damages.
- the possibility that there may be similar cases is not considered -- until further reliable "evidence" is produced by others. Specifically isolated cases do not raise questions, so nothing is "said", "heard" or "seen" about system issues.
- the nature of "evidence" may itself be called into question, as remarked with respect to its "fact-based", "reality-based", "evidence-based" and "knowledge-based" forms, variously criticized by Alex Beam (*Knowledge-based gibberish*, *Boston Globe*, 8 July 2011) -- eliciting a response characteristic of the confusion (P. Z. Myers, *New strategy: if we sow enough confusion about what knowledge is, we can win!* *Pharyngula*, 12 July 2011).

An interesting pattern made apparent in the case of the news organization was the delegation of investigation into potentially problematic situations to external legal counsel of highest repute. Complete reliance was then placed on their report with no effort whatsoever to examine the documents on which it was based. No second opinion was sought, as might have otherwise be assumed to have been a prudent measure. Much was made of the fact that the documents on which the legal counsel was based only "came to light" very recently -- having been withheld under circumstances which have yet to be clarified by the judicial process.

That the report was subsequently held to have been flawed by the Select Committee is then held to be the responsibility of the legal counsel, not of the governing authority. A comparable relationship has proven to be exceptionally problematic in the case of dependence on external auditors of the highest repute -- as in the Enron scandal and in the lead up to the financial crisis of 2008-2009. It is yet to be made clear how the legal counsel was instructed by News International, namely what kind of report was "expected". Subsequent to the hearings, the law firm has been granted a right to clarify the matter (Ian Burrell and Oliver Wright, *Law firm given right of reply over 'failure' to expose bribery*, *The Independent*, 21 July 2011):

News International has today authorised the law firm Harbottle and Lewis to answer questions from the Metropolitan Police Service and parliamentary select committees in respect of what they were asked to do. Earlier in the day Harbottle had said News International's refusal to release it from professional duties of confidentiality effectively prevented it from responding to "any inaccurate statements or contentions".

Other evidence given has been contested, after James Murdoch told the media committee he was not "aware" of an email suggesting the practice went wider than a "rogue" *News of the World* reporter (*James Murdoch evidence questioned by former executives*, *BBC News*, 21 July 2011). Former NoW editor Colin Myler and ex-NI legal manager Tom Crone said they "did inform" him of the email (*The 'For Neville' email: two words that could bring down an empire*, *The Guardian*, 22 July 2011). However James Murdoch says he "stands by his testimony" (*James Murdoch stands by evidence he gave Commons committee*, *The Guardian*, 22 July 2011). The Prime Minister has

now indicated that James Murdoch "clearly" needs to answer questions from MPs after his evidence on phone hacking was challenged. (*Phone hacking: PM says James Murdoch has 'questions to answer'*, BBC News, 22 July 2011; )

## Cultivating a "filter bubble"

**Yes men:** The organizational pattern in which the highest authorities cultivate a "yes man" culture is well known. They thereby avoid being informed of problematic information. At its worst it is the tendency to cultivate subordinates who adopt reporting strategies delightfully articulated in the well-known *Yes Minister* series. This characteristic is typically vigorously denied by the highest authority. Subordinates do however have to judge carefully what "bad news" to filter through to their superiors and when, but subordinates may well not "dare" to inform them. A related pattern has now been explained with respect to the manner in which search engines filter results in response to a request -- effectively ensuring that requesters function within a "filter bubble" (Eli Pariser, *The Filter Bubble: what the internet is hiding from you*, 2011).

**Delegation of trust:** The question is then what those responsible for a global organization do about this possibility. Typically the response is that they delegate responsibility to those they claim to trust. Should anything happen, they can then claim that they have been betrayed by those they trusted -- implying that they had no responsibility whatsoever in creating the possibility of that situation. The fundamental misjudgment in appointing the subordinate in the first place is somehow excluded from governance responsibility.

It is of course the case that such trust delegation can be replicated all the way down the institutional hierarchy. The question is then where do "bad things happen" and who is then responsible for them? At each level, the responsible individual can claim that he or she was "kept in the dark" by those who perpetrated whatever is finally recognized to be reprehensible, or who knew of that behaviour. Those responsible at the highest level can therefore always solemnly claim that their institution is clean -- until solid "evidence" to the contrary is appropriately presented to them. "Oversight" is then necessarily "superficial" -- any mistakes are made "under the radar" of governance.

**Metaphors:** A potentially useful metaphor is the [thermocline](#) in the ocean, namely the invisible blanket which separates the upper mixed layer from the calm deep water below. In this case it is things which happen in the dark depths below the information thermocline which do not penetrate through to the light above.

Another useful metaphor is that of "grooming" to ensure acceptance of inappropriate behaviour (as defined with respect to [adult grooming](#) or [child grooming](#)). This usefully raises the question as to whether it is the ultimate authority who instigates a pattern of grooming behaviour with respect to subordinates -- and so on down the hierarchy. The reverse may also be true (as well-portrayed in the *Yes Minister* series) in which lower echelons "groom" their superiors.

**Ignorance as guarantee of innocence:** The interviews with the governance of the news organization made it clear that ignorance was assumed to equate with innocence, whatever the behaviour purportedly undertaken in the name of the organization by its employees. A similar pattern is evident in the case of the Catholic institutions and to a degree in the case of the treatment of prisoners. Those at the highest level of governance do not expect (and do not wish) to be informed about "isolated rotten apples". It is seemingly not even held to be their responsibility to suspect that such behaviour might emerge "on their watch".

Curiously there is seemingly no equivalent principle of governance to the legal principle "[ignorance of the law excuses no one](#)". This holds that a person who is unaware of a law may not escape liability for violating that law merely because he or she was unaware of its content. It would appear that "ignorance is bliss". There is no expectation that governance should be sensitive to how systems tend to fail as documented by John Gall (*Systematics: how systems really work and how they fail*, 1976). However for Catholic institutions, [vincible ignorance](#) is that which a person could remove by applying reasonable diligence.

**Due diligence:** Reasonable diligence, in turn, is that diligence that a conscientious person would display in seeking the correct answer to a question given (a) the gravity of the question and (b) his particular resources. (James Akin, *Ignorance: invincible and vincible*, *Kitchener Waterloo Traditional Catholic*, 26 June 2011).

The relevance of the principle has been discussed in relation to clerical sexual abuse. A valuable description of the problematic nature of the situation is provided by Michael Murtagh (*Out of Our Depth*, *The Furrow*, 47, 6, 1996, pp. 344-349):

We have been 'out of our depth' in matters of human nature of which we ought to be informed. the response or defence of vincible ignorance betrays a certain pastoral and sexual illiteracy. We have faced and still face significant anxiety, and in response we have used every mechanism in the book to allay it. We have denied the extent or existence of such unspeakable deviance, such 'appalling vista'. We have blamed, scapegoated others, and misplaced our anger on to them. the problem has been rationalized and historicized, and purification sought from the dregs of priestly decency. We have withdrawn, cut loose on some areas of ministry, or of self, or taken cover behind the dry lines of legalese. The cross refuses to go away. The anxiety remains.

Irrespective of any issues of moral theology, it might well be asked whether those in the highest positions of governance in the three cases cited applied due diligence in investigating warning signals regarding problematic behaviour. An example of failure of due diligence is provided in the case of the news organization by responses to the Select Committee (Martin Hickman and Cahal Milmo, *How the answers given to MPs have simply raised more questions*, *The Independent*, 21 July 2011).

**Investigative skills:** It is striking that each of the three cases prides itself on its investigative skills, respectively: investigative journalism, identification of sinful predisposition, or threat detection by intelligence operations. Curiously, in each case, these skills do not seem to have been successfully applied to their own institutions to enable better governance of them. These resources are primarily, if not exclusively, applied to "others" in external situations -- presumably on the assumption that colleagues cannot be suspected of

inappropriate behaviour (for which superiors might in some way be held responsible).

## Designing systemic incommunicability into global institutions

Much is made of the skills in designing espionage networks ("spy networks") for the acquisition of intelligence and as a necessary complement to covert operations. These skills are necessarily a feature of [industrial espionage](#) (corporate espionage) of relevance to the highly competitive environment in which global institutions function -- irrespective of conventional security preoccupations. A phone-hacking operation necessarily calls upon such methods although a question was raised as to whether the acknowledged phone-hacking by the news organization of the UK Culture Secretary responsible for media policy, was "phone-hacking" or "industrial espionage" (Dan Sabbagh, *Tessa Jowell phone-hacking admission changes everything*, *The Guardian*, 10 April 2011).

Given the degree of complicity between institutions of global scope, as noted below, there is necessarily little difficulty in obtaining the advice of security specialists on how to make use of the techniques of espionage in designing incommunicability into such corporate structures.

A primary concern is to ensure that if "captured", or if the "cover is blown", the repercussions of such espionage will be minimized. Damage limitation provisions are prudently designed into the system in advance. The following terms are suggestive of the procedures (Norman Polmar and Thomas B. Allen, *Encyclopedia of Espionage*, 1997; Glenn P. Hastedt and Steven W. Guerrier (Eds.), *Spies, Wiretaps, and Secret Operations*, 2010):

- **BIGOT-list:** a list of the names of all persons who are privy to the plans for a sensitive intelligence operation
- **brush pass:** a brief encounter where something is passed between a case officer and an agent, such as at a reception.
- **compartmenting:** the various ways that information is held to only those who "have-a-need-to-know" in an organization
  - vertical compartmenting: denies information up or down the chain of command
  - lateral compartmenting: denies information from peer groups
  - double compartmenting: spoofing the original group who held the information into believing the operation has ended when it has simply moved to a new compartment.
- **cutout:** mechanism or person that acts as a compartment between the members of an operation but which allows them to pass material or messages securely. A "cutout" is intended to shield or isolate a person at a higher level in the governance of operations. The higher level person may have several functions: bringing other operatives into the institution, and protecting lower level infiltrators; providing information from within a penetrated target organization to an outside organization; or a combination of both. The extensive use of cutouts, can become a long chain of individuals. This performs another purpose, as with a "front organizations" in that it becomes a shell game to counter the investigation by external parties, who have finite and limited resources. When suspicion arises, the large number of persons and organizations connected to the conspiracy can devour endless hours and cost, which has the effect of slowing down the process of exposing any such covert organization.
- **dead drop:** a secret location where materials can be left in concealment for another party to retrieve. This eliminates the need for direct contact in hostile situations.
- **front organization:** any entity set up by and controlled by another (part of the) organization to act for the parent group without the actions being attributed to the parent group.
- **impersonal communications:** secret communication techniques used between a case officer and a human intelligence asset when no physical contact is possible or desired.
- **need to know:** describes the restriction of data which is considered very sensitive, even if one has all the necessary official approvals, unless there is a specific need to know -- namely access to the information must be necessary for the conduct of the official's duties. The aim is to make it difficult for unauthorized access to occur, without inconveniencing legitimate access. Need-to-know also aims to discourage "browsing" of sensitive material by limiting access to the smallest possible number of people.
- **ring:** consists of several collectors of information from different areas within an organization. To protect the most valuable source the least "productive" person involved, whose knowledge and ability to collect information is second or third hand, functions as the head of the group. He or she carries the information from higher level gatherers to outside persons, so as to "cutout" contact between involvement at the highest level and any external organization.
- **spoofing:** a ploy designed to deceive the observer into believing that an operation has gone bad when, in fact, it has been put into another compartment.
- **window dressing:** ancillary materials that are included in a cover story or deception operation to help convince the opposition or casual observers that what they are observing is genuine.

Irrespective of such specifics, of special interest are theoretical approaches to the design of structures to restrict communicability and comprehension of larger scope. Any such theory is of course as adequate for enhancing communicability as it is for inhibiting it. In this respect the work of mathematician Ronald Atkin on simplicial complexes and [q-analysis](#) is especially insightful (*Multidimensional Man; can man live in 3-dimensional space?* 1981), as separately summarized [Comprehension: Social organization determined by incommunicability of insights](#)). It is readily understandable how such insights could be adapted to ensuring the incommunicability of "inconvenient truth" -- namely designing in the darkness into which Rupert Murdoch plaintively claimed he had been kept.

Speculatively it might be asked whether the [triangular representation](#) Atkin uses to make the basic point of his argument does not offer an excellent manner of looking at the relationship between the three monkeys at the possibility that by their interaction they could sustain communication "black holes" within a global structure. Atkin refers to the latter as "q-holes". [Atkin's involvement in chess programming](#) are indicative of the potential of these approaches to more general concerns with strategic development (*Multi Dimensional Structure in the Game of Chess*, 1972).

## Cultivating a culture of corporate irresponsibility

The nature of [corporate culture](#) and the concerns it raises have been the subject of many studies. Whilst some of the specifics of how a "filter bubble" is cultivated can be identified, as with the possibility of designing protective measures of incommunicability into a global structure, it is far less clear how a corporate culture engendering such specifics is itself engendered. Nor is it clear how "social irresponsibility" can be isolated, such as to be plausibly deniable, in the case of institutions claiming adherence to principles of "[social responsibility](#)". How does the "right hand" avoid knowing what the "left hand" is doing?

Where a global institution is headed by an iconic figure who either builds it and/or sustains it, the process is a mysterious emanation of that person's personality. The "emanation" is intimately related to the person's style: what is said, what is not said but implied, what is forbidden, what is tolerated, perceptible discrepancies between articulated principles and evident practice. As a living culture it entrains and encourages compatible behaviour -- coopting those compatible with it, excluding those who are not.

The culture is above all intangible and a challenge to any articulation -- but acknowledged by those who experience it. Corporate cultures have proven to be a major challenge to mergers between organizations having different cultures. The issue of the cultures "of the north" vs. those "of the south" is currently held to be fundamental to the future viability of the eurozone.

The concern here is how a global corporate culture can engender behaviour (considered inappropriate by others) whose existence can be denied with apparent sincerity by those held to be globally responsible. Especially striking is the case of abuse by clergy in Catholic institutions since this pattern is detectable over decades. The significance of any reports would seem to have been minimized with a minimum of diligence in any follow-up with those further down the relevant branch of the hierarchy. Much has been made of the tendency simply to transfer those potentially implicated to some other location without effectively curtailing their pattern of behaviour -- whilst still retaining the capacity to deny its significance.

How can a global institution claiming to represent the highest values sustain such behaviour? In the case of well-known corporations, who authorizes and arranges for the funding of a "[dirty tricks](#)" section -- and ensures that few acknowledge its existence? How are arrangements made for a "[black budget](#)", namely one that is secretly collected from the overall income of a country, a corporation, a society of any form?

Especially interesting is the case with respect to the treatment of prisoners as a potential source of valued information. Given the exceptionally problematic character of that treatment, and the unusual attitude of the people required to implement it, it might be asked how they are selected and "filtered through" the institution from those parts which bathe in a sentiment of innocence to those which have few qualms regarding what they are under pressure to do. Who organizes the selection/filtration process? Who approves it? Various studies and interviews continue to highlight this pattern ([Philippe Sands](#), *Torture Team: Rumsfeld's Memo and the Betrayal of American Values*, 2008). How is this to be compared to the classic case documented by Hannah Arendt (*Eichmann in Jerusalem: a report on the banality of evil*, 1963)?

One insight is offered by a comparison with the classic case of the [Enron Corporation](#). Before its bankruptcy in late 2001, it employed approximately 22,000 staff and was one of the world's leading electricity, natural gas, communications, and pulp and paper companies, with claimed revenues of nearly \$101 billion in 2000. At the end of 2001, it was revealed that its reported financial condition was sustained substantially by institutionalised, systematic, and creatively planned accounting fraud, known as the "[Enron scandal](#)". It is now recognized as the exemplar of "[creative accounting](#)" -- a euphemism for accounting practices that may follow the letter of the rules of [standard accounting practices](#), but certainly deviate from the spirit of those rules. Auditors of high repute were associated with the process.

The legality of the authorisation for "[enhanced interrogation](#)", and its questionable definition in the case of the treatment of those suspected of terrorism, is increasingly being framed as "legal spin" -- meriting a comparable euphemism such as "creative legality". It was by this means that procedures used were reframed as not infringing the Geneva Conventions.

## Studied ignorance: willful blindness and collective amnesia

The excellent commentary on the news organization case by Roy Greenslade (*News Corp's three wise monkeys knew nothing*, *London Evening Standard*, 20 July 2011) notes that the three executives interviewed:

- emphasized consistently that they were ignorant of any wrongdoing in an insignificant part of a sprawling global empire, having been misled by an anonymous group of executives "hired and trusted" by Murdoch Senior who were misled in their turn by the people they had also hired and trusted.
- employed different techniques in maintaining this overarching defence: The 80-year-old Rupert did it haltingly, giving us an insight into his increasingly fragile state of health. His corporate-speak heir apparent did it with confidence, but at tedious length. Brooks did it with an impressive straight-faced coolness, illustrating that she was mistress of her brief.

Greenslade argues that their positions lacked credibility given the well-known hands-on governance by Rupert Murdoch in frequent contact with his senior executives -- and the impossibility of conceiving that anyone would endeavour to lie to him either by commission or omission. As Greenslade puts it:

- he saw through bluster and was not above testing the veracity of what he was told by one executive by running it past another -- how come he did not "smell a rat"
- his cross-referencing of his internal company sources was journalistic; he wanted to hear the minutiae; who had said what to whom
- how had he avoided responding to reports published in other national papers that hacking was a routine activity within the *News of the World* and at other tabloids
- it remains unclear why either Murdoch or his son failed to demand a forensic internal inquiry to get at the truth, rather than, as

they claimed, being betrayed by people who had lied in ways which they accepted.

- the news organization executives interviewed then affected to ignore the drip-drip-drip of allegations published over the course of two years, issuing an apology only when obliged to do so by circumstances
- the departure of various *News of the World* executives was never adequately explained.
- the misdemeanours have been blamed on unidentified staff, together with the police -- who in turn laid the blame on News International.
- the argument suggests, at least, an abnegation of responsibility and a failure of corporate governance

A significant feature of any culture of irresponsibility is to render such irresponsibility "unconscious" -- perhaps as part of the wider pattern identified by John Ralston Saul (*The Unconscious Civilization*, 1995). It is possibly to be recognized as systemic negligence and necessarily has that consequence.

Those responsible for the governance of Enron were characterized by investigators as indulging in **willful blindness**. The news organization executives were invited to comment by the Select Committee on the applicability of the term to their attitude to corporate governance. A related term is collective amnesia -- as the report of the previous interview of the executives of that same news organization by the Select Committee concluded in 2003. The phenomenon merits careful attention as previously argued (*Pointers to the Pathology of Collective Memory*, 1980):

- David Leigh, Patrick Wintour, Caroline Davies (*MPs' verdict on News of the World phone-hacking scandal: Amnesia, obfuscation and hush money*, *The Guardian*, 24 February 2010)
- Paul Douglas Newman (*Collective Amnesia or Collective Alzheimer's: America 'Remembers' Ronald Reagan*, *Common Dreams*, 7 June 2004)
- Joseph Farah (*The world's collective amnesia*. *WorldNetDaily*, 19 September 2002)
- *Collective Amnesia: Vietnam War* [resources]

At what point do claims of "being out of touch" and "not knowing what is going on" cease to be credible? In such cases, as with the seeming ignorance of many governance matters by those responsible for the news organization, it is appropriate to ask whether they are competent to govern the organization. How ignorant is it possible to be, and for what period, without jeopardizing the viability of the institution?

It is appropriate to note that, when challenged by UK Parliamentarians, those responsible for the news organization, the UK Prime Minister, and the Metropolitan Police Commissioners all placed great emphasis on the argument that if they had **known then** what they **know now** they would then have acted differently. Curiously, both prior to and subsequent to the appointment of **Andy Coulson** (former editor of *News of the World*) as his press secretary by the Prime Minister, he only received a minimal security vetting in contrast to the more extensive vetting of his predecessors. As noted by Ian Katz (*Andy Coulson vetting saga: damp squib, or dynamite?* *The Guardian*, 22 July 2011):

It's worth remembering that by May 2010, when Cameron and his PR chief arrived in Downing Street, the *Guardian* had run 91 articles about illegal activities at the *News of the World* under Coulson, 14 of them on the front page. Never mind the private warnings passed to Cameron's staff by Nick Clegg, Paddy Ashdown and the *Guardian*.

However, as stressed by the Leader of the Opposition in Parliament, it is not sufficient to use the clarity of hindsight to excuse the inadequacy of foresight -- especially if warnings **then** had been ignored and cautionary briefings **then** were refused. As he put it:

It's not about hindsight ... It's not about whether Mr Coulson lied to him. It's about all the information and warnings that the PM ignored. He was warned and he preferred to ignore the warnings. (*Phone-hacking scandal: Wednesday 20 July 2011*, *The Guardian*, 20 July 2011)

## Three "monkeys": legal pleas, modes of spin, or wise action

Rather than associating "monkeys" pejoratively with individuals, or focusing on the wisdom which the three together are held to represent, the question here is whether as "information functions" they can be used -- in the light of the cases cited -- to understand the forms taken by "monkeying" with governance on a global scale. This may then enhance insight into how the subtle principle represented by the three wise monkeys can be embodied.

Fig. 1: Elaboration of the nature of monkeying					
Three defensive legal pleas (or four)	Three modes of spin (or four) ("monkeying around")				Three wise acts (or four)
	<i>Creative legality and regulations</i>	<i>Creative accounting and statistics</i>	<i>Creative story spinning and distraction (PR)</i>	<i>Creative design of applications and devices</i>	
rotten apple, rogue operator -- refusal to "see" a wider pattern (selective blindness)	ensure plausible deniability and a focus on isolated culprits if identified	"cast a blind eye" on any questionable transactions; ensure focus on any fraud as isolated incidents	ensure focus on iconic stories and symbolic contrition to distract from endemic conditions	blind to risks and defects	due diligence: look more systemically and more critically and see the subtler pattern
implicit obedience to authority -- refusal to "hear" one's	Nuremberg Defence	responsive to "positive reporting" expectations	elaborate on what the client "wants to hear", beyond the explicit requirement of the	indifference to feedback	reconsider unethical orders in the light of ethical codes, higher values and hearing

conscience (selective deafness)	Superior Orders	of the client	brief	on defects and risks	the silent voice of one's conscience
studied ignorance ("silence", keeping "mum"; omerta) say nothing about it (selective commentary)	in the absence of hard evidence, deny knowledge of any wrong doing -- or need to query the possibility	ensure that questionable transactions are ignored systematically	avoid mention of facts reframing the "spin" placed upon them for wider consumption	failure to mention defects in recommending application	duty to protest: speak out against inappropriate behaviour having recognized the limitations of knowledge presented
inaction in response to problem issues; withholding assistance to those in danger	avoid action by instigating legal harassment of accusers	avoid action by selection and presentation of misleading data	avoid action by negatively framing accusers	failure to repair defects	right action
.	<i>legitimacy and appropriateness</i>	<i>accountability responsibility</i>	<i>image building attraction</i>	<i>appropriate technology</i>	.

**Rotten apple plea:** With respect to the constrained capacity to "see" (of the "first monkey"), a "bad apple" argument is readily used in defence of problems thereby framed as isolated and typically the responsibility of rogue operators. The argument was notably deployed by the news organization with respect to phone hacking, by the Catholic church with respect to clerical abuse of children, and by the US government with respect to treatment of prisoners (in Abu Ghraib). The implication of the highest authority is thereby limited. The defence is characteristic of a culture in which the implicit message from authority is to "get results", "whatever it takes" -- but do not report how this was achieved, and responsibility for such a requirement will be denied, as with any knowledge of the process, or any implication that it was duly authorised. It is effectively created as a pattern of deniable responsibility or [plausible deniability](#).

As an exercise in damage limitation, when problems become evident, these may be creatively used as a focus for news management and spin, as in the case of acts of contrition with respect to those isolated cases -- carefully ignoring the "collateral damage" resulting from any wider systemic implications. This is most evident in the media coverage of returning soldiers with no attention to the civilians wounded by their actions.

With respect to "creative design", especially interesting are the applications developed for phone and computer hacking, as well as the remarkable case of the software used in risk assessment used in the design of [financial derivatives](#) central to the financial crisis of 2008-2009. The innovative formula of [David X. Li](#) with regard to the [Gaussian Copula function](#) is of interest since its successful use is alleged to be at the root of the overconfidence of the global financial community in taking the high orders of investment risk which led to that crisis. It is admirably described by Felix Salmon (*Recipe for Disaster: the formula that killed Wall Street*, *Wired*, 17.03, March 2009).

**Superior orders plea:** With respect to the constrained capacity to "hear" (of the "second monkey"), this may be understood as a failure to listen to one's conscience in the face of unethical orders. This is discussed separately (*Obedience to orders in enabling humanitarian disaster*, 2011). A curious feature of many humanitarian disasters is the manner in which they are enabled by obedience to "orders" as these may be variously understood -- notably in the light of religious injunctions and spiritual inspiration.

It is best known as the [Nuremberg Defence](#) as used by some of the Nazi war criminals during the 1945-1946 [Nuremberg Trials](#). It was also characteristic of the trial of Adolf Eichmann who explicitly declared that he had abdicated his conscience in order to follow the *Führerprinzip* -- insisting that he was only "following orders".

More generally this is understood as the [Superior Orders](#) plea. The plea has been the subject of extensive commentary (Luther N. Norene, *Obedience to Orders as a Defense to a Criminal Act*, 1971; [Jacob G. Hornberger](#), *Obedience to God or Obedience to Orders?* 2009). Ongoing judicial inquiries with respect to the news organization will determine which employees or subcontractors will seek to claim they were only following orders, whether implicit or not. As a pattern characteristically engendered by a corporate culture committed to a strange form of [cultural violence](#) the future may discover that the "torture" used in the handling of prisoners was simply a consequence of people "following orders" in order to "get results".

This framing offers a paradoxical contrast between the failure to "hear" the concerns of others through the higher priority accorded to "superior" orders from God as noted with respect to Iraq in the case of both [George W. Bush](#) and [Tony Blair](#). Irrespective of the resulting deaths, Bush is alleged to have clearly stated that he was on a mission from God when he launched the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq (Ewen MacAskill, *George Bush: 'God told me to end the tyranny in Iraq'*, *The Guardian*, 7 October 2005; Rupert Cornwell, *Bush: God told me to invade Iraq*, *The Independent*, 7 October, 2005). Although consistent with other remarks, this account was subsequently denied and considered "absurd" (James Sturcke, *White House denies Bush God claims*, *The Guardian*, 7 October 2005).

In subsequent interviews, as with George Bush, Blair has referred to the role of his Christian faith in his decision to go to war in Iraq -- thereby enabling the death and suffering of hundreds of thousands. Might he be said, like Bush, to have taken his orders from God, or be carrying out God's will? He has stated that he had prayed about the issue, affirming that God would judge him for his decision: *I think if you have faith about these things, you realise that judgement is made by other people ... and if you believe in God, it's made by God as well.* (*Blair 'prayed to God' over Iraq*, *BBC News*, 3 March 2006).

Of particular interest in the case of the phone-hacking was the refusal of the UK Prime Minister to listen to a briefing on the matter -- to which various parties have drawn attention (Adam Gabbatt and Matthew Taylor, *Phone hacking: Cameron chief of staff 'turned down' Met police briefing*, *The Guardian*, 19 July 2011; H el ene Mulholland and Matthew Taylor, *Phone hacking: emails show Cameron aide 'stopped' briefing*, *The Guardian*, 19 July 2011).

**Ignorance plea:** With respect to the constrained capacity to "speak" (of the "third monkey"), this has recently been most evident in the case of the news organization executives on the several occasions when they have been interviewed by the UK Parliamentary Select Committee. As noted in the commentary Roy Greenslade (*News Corp's three wise monkeys knew nothing*, *London Evening Standard*, 20 July 2011), the executives interviewed emphasized consistently that they were ignorant of any wrongdoing -- using different techniques

in maintaining this overarching defence (John Plunkett, *Rupert Murdoch: I knew nothing about phone hacking*, *The Guardian*, 19 July 2011).

Such ignorance may of course be feigned in ways to which the Committee was attentive. Appropriately in her above-mentioned comments on the occasion of the Oslo Sustainability Summit 2011: *The Age of Stupid or the Age of Wisdom?*, Catherine Cameron noted the tendency to feign ignorance with respect to the challenges of governance response to the issues of sustainability. The claim may be made that access to particular knowledge is "above my pay grade" (or possibly "beneath my pay grade").

Another relevant example is the case of French trader **Jérôme Kerviel** convicted in the **January 2008 Société Générale trading loss incident** for breach of trust, forgery and unauthorized use of the bank's computers, resulting in losses valued at €4.9billion. Société Générale characterizes Kerviel as a **rogue trader** acting without its authorization, assertions that have been met with skepticism from expert commentators and analysts alike. In his legal defence, Kerviel had told investigators that such practices are widespread and that getting a profit makes the hierarchy turn a blind eye --alleging that his superiors knew of his trading activities, and that the practice was very common (Jérôme Kerviel, *L'engrenage: Mémoires d'un Trader*, 2010).

Clearly there can be no reason no reason to speak out or query the actions of subordinates if one is ignorant of anything giving rise to suspicion, and especially if one trusted those subordinates and assumed that the organization operated in a culture of trust. Global governance could clearly benefit from the Islamic adage: *Trust in Allah -- but tether your camel*.

**Inaction:** With respect to the constrained capacity to "**act**" (of the occasional "fourth monkey"), it is appropriate to note that the UK Prime Minister and the executives of the news organization all used the same argument with respect to the phone-hacking scandal, namely "**if only I knew then what I know now**" -- implying they would then have acted differently, notably to initiate inquiries. This would tend to be a standard plea with respect to a long-developing disaster -- after its impact has become widely evident.

The issue has been variously explored (Karen A. Cerulo, *Never Saw It Coming: cultural challenges to envisioning the worst*, 2006; Joshua Cooper Ramo, *The Age of the Unthinkable: why the new world disorder constantly surprises us and what we can do about it*, 2009). The question is whether responsible global governance calls for special attention to anticipate such possibilities -- and whether failure to recognize their probability is an indication of irresponsibility (Nassim Nicholas Taleb, *The Black Swan: the impact of the highly improbable*, 2007). Much more problematic are the efforts by global organizations or their agents to undermine and inhibit the action of others endeavouring to warn of emerging issues, as noted above (Naomi Oreskes and Erik M. Conway, *Merchants of Doubt*, 2010). Instances of "targeting", intimidation, and bullying are noted by Henry Porter (*Phone-hacking scandal has exposed a culture of bullying and intimidation at News International*, *The Observer*, 24 July 2011): *Stories of naked threats against anyone who dares oppose the Murdochs are reminiscent of the Godfather movies*.

Irrespective of "**ignorance of the law excuses no one**", as mentioned above, it might be asked whether governance can claim to be responsible if it is ignorant of the "laws" by which complex systems tend to fail as documented by John Gall (*Systematics: how systems really work and how they fail*, 1976). What is due diligence to mitigate against such ignorance?

The "fourth monkey" achieved a degree of recognition with respect to the criminal allegations associated with the **Whitewater controversy** variously linked to **Bill Clinton**. Under the title *The Fourth Monkey Congress* (*US Congressional Record*, 14, 58, 12 May 1994), Congressman Smith of Texas declared:

... the congressional leadership must know more about Whitewater than they are admitting. Why else would they be doing everything in their power to sweep under the rug anything related to Whitewater? Of course, on one hand you cannot blame them, because that is how they have handled investigations before. There was a **House Post Office scandal**, but no hearings. There was a **House bank scandal**, but no hearings. The congressional leadership has done one better than the storybook monkeys of see no evil, hear no evil, and speak no evil. To this group of three they have added a fourth monkey -- hold no hearings. Hold no hearings is in charge of congressional oversight for the President who is in Whitewater, or for any Democrat who is in hot water. The President should tell the congressional leadership to quit monkeying around and hold hearings so we can have full disclosure now.

The strategic implications of uncertainty with regard to appropriate action have been brought into an unusual degree of focus through the notorious "poem" regarding the **known unknowns** formulated by the US Secretary of Defense at a press conference in 2002 -- which he subsequently made the theme of his memoir (Donald Rumsfeld, *Known and Unknown: A Memoir*, 2011). That theme is separately discussed using a Chinese cultural framework (*Unknown Undoing: challenge of incomprehensibility of systemic neglect*, 2008).

In the light of the **Precautionary Principle**, such considerations suggest the need to focus on questions such as:

- what will governors of global institutions know in future that they should know now -- and how should they act now in anticipation of such knowledge?
- why do governors of global institutions not know that there will be things they ought to know now -- and how should they act now to reduce implications of that incapacity?

As noted above, it is not sufficient to use the clarity of hindsight to excuse the inadequacy of foresight -- especially if warnings **then** had been ignored and cautionary briefings **then** were refused. Provocatively, could such "hindsight" then be framed as anatomically confused with misunderstandings of "foresight" (*Backside to the Future: coherence and conflation of dominant strategic metaphors*, 2003)?

## Confidence artistry as "monkeying"

Suzanne Moore argues that it should not be expected that the phone-hacking scandal will clean up the messy relationship of politicians

with the media (*The end of spin? Don't be daft. We've forgotten how to do without it*, *The Guardian*, 22 July 2011):

Spin is what got us into this fine mess. David Cameron, the glossy product of this culture, hired a man, Andy Coulson, because he was good at spin. He ignored warnings that he may have presided over a culture of criminality....This need to manage perception - not simply to manage policy - is what brings the politicians and media together. With the police turning a blind eye. This is not party political: it has come to be seen as the way things have to be done. We no longer know how to do things differently.

The nature of the "mess" is usefully specified by Russ Baker (*12 Ways Rupert Murdoch's Media Empire Has Made the World Worse*, *AlterNet*, 25 July 2011, originally titled *What Rupert Murdoch Means For You Personally*, *WhoWhatWhy.com*, 25 July 2011).

The indication above regarding 3x3 and 4x4 patterns -- with the development of the latter into an 8x8 pattern -- is suggestive of the range of dynamic confidence plays in an information society. It calls for attentive identification of subsets of:

- Creative legality and regulations, perhaps to include (intellectual) property, injunctions and superinjunctions
- Creative accounting and statistics, perhaps to highlight the selection and massaging of (statistical) data, including responses to search queries
- Creative story spinning and distraction (PR), perhaps to include hope-mongering, "talking things up", "being positive", and political promises
- Creative design of applications and devices, perhaps to include [Apple tracking by iPhone](#), CFCs, DDT, etc

Of interest are initiatives which combine several subsets as with [false flag operations](#), or the recent initiative to dissociate legal from spiritual responsibility within the Catholic church (Riazat Butt and Owen Bowcott, *Court to decide Catholic church liability for priest abuse*, *The Guardian*, 6 July 2011; Jamie Doward, *Catholic church's plea could rule out damages for priests' abuse*, *The Guardian*, 6 July 2011). At issue is whether the relationship between bishop and priest is similar to that between employers and staff with the possibility that priests are creatively defined as not being legally employees of the church. Also of interest are systematic efforts, notably within European countries, to avoid referenda on controversial issues where the results are liable to highlight popular opposition to initiatives favoured by government -- as with respect to immigration policy

With respect to confidence ploys, a commentary on the following tables is provided separately ([Discontinuity: Governance through confidence artistry](#)):

<b>Fig. 2: Table of Confidence Ploys</b> Pattern of confidence ploys essential in the processes of governance responding to challenges. Combinations may also be successfully used. (reproduced from <i>Encyclopedia of World Problems and Human Potential</i> )				
Covert informal response	[A] Non-response	[B] Postponed response	[C] Strong short-term response followed by no further action Token response with phased out follow-up	[D] Strong continuing response but ineffectual implementation Inappropriately implemented response
Overt formal response				
	<i>When holding superiority</i>		<i>For confused situations</i>	
Deny Ignore Repress [1]	Denial of issue (possibly with non-recognition of its promoter)	Denial of issue, delaying any covert determination of its significance	Denial of issue with covert token monitoring of its significance	Denial of issue with covert long-term monitoring of little significance
Discredit Distract Harass [2]	Discrediting and harassment of issue and promoter to ensure lack of action	Discrediting and harassment of issue and promoter to delay covert action significantly	Discrediting and harassment of issue and promoter to legitimate any token action	Discrediting and harassment of issue and promoter to legitimate other inappropriate programmes
Acknowledge [3]	Publicised recognition of issue without further implications for action	Publicised recognition of issue delaying covert action implications	Publicised recognition of issue oriented around token action response	Publicised recognition of issue around enduring action of unchecked relevance
	<i>For confrontation</i>		<i>For gaining ground</i>	
Displacement Bluster/Protest Scapegoat [4]	Bluster and scapegoating to displace concern and effectively justify inaction	Bluster and scapegoating to shift priorities and justify covert action delay	Bluster and scapegoating to give credibility to token action	Bluster and scapegoating to disguise inappropriateness of other action taken
Provoke Ensnare Disinform [5]	Provocation in order to disguise inaction	Provocation in order to delay need for covert action	Provocation by short-term action of little consequence	Continuing provocation disguising inappropriateness of other action taken
Promise Commitment [6]	Expressed commitment to action without any intention of taking any	Expressed commitment to overt action which is systematically postponed	Expressed commitment to action conceived as token and short-term	Expressed commitment to enduring action of unverified appropriateness
	<i>For attack</i>		<i>For desperate straits</i>	
Invitation Cooptation Honour [7]	Publicized invitation to participate -- in action which never takes place	Publicized invitation to participate -- in action which is postponed	Publicized invitation to participate -- in token short-term initiatives	Publicized invitation to participate -- in other long-term inappropriate projects
Encourage Lure Overload [8]	Enthusiastic encouragement to take action -- without any valid support	Enthusiastic encouragement to take action -- delaying any necessary support	Enthusiastic encouragement to take action - with rapid termination of support	Enduring encouragement and support -- without adequate check on its appropriateness
Action on issue	Action specifically designed	Action delayed so that it is	Strong action of brief duration	Strong enduring action -- without

[9]	to have no effect	ineffective	(rendering it ineffective)	adequate check on implementation effectiveness
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**Fig. 3: Table of Traditional Chinese Strategems**  
Adapted from Gao Yuan: *Lure the Tiger Out of the Mountains: the thirty-six strategems of Ancient China* (London, Piatkus, 1991)  
(reproduced from *Encyclopedia of World Problems and Human Potential*)

	Assertion	Denial	Assertion with denial	Neither assertion nor denial
	<i>When holding superiority</i>		<i>For confused situations</i>	
Invention	Cross the sea by fooling the sky [1] Besiege kingdom A to save kingdom B [2] Kill with a borrowed knife [3]	Relax while the enemy exhausts himself [4] Loot a burning house [5] Make a feint to East while attacking to West [6]	Steal the firewood from under the cauldron [19] Fish in troubled waters [20] Slough off the cicada's shell [21]	Shut the door to catch the thief [22] Befriend distant state while attacking neighbour [23] Obtain safe passage to conquer the kingdom of A [24]
	<i>For confrontation</i>		<i>For gaining ground</i>	
Rigidity	Create something out of nothing [7] Pretend to take path A while taking path B [8] Watch the fires burning across the river [9]	Conceal a dagger in a smile [10] Sacrifice the plum tree for the peach tree [11] Take the opportunity to pilfer a goat [12]	Replace the beams and pillars with rotten timber [25] Point at the mulberry and curse the locust [26] Play dumb while remaining smart [27]	Pull down the ladder after the ascent [28] Deck the tree with bogus blossoms [29] Make the host and guest exchange places [30]
	<i>For attack</i>		<i>For desperate straits</i>	
Ambiguity	Beat the grass to startle the snake [13] Raise a corpse from the dead [14] Lure the tiger out of the mountains [15]	Snag the enemy by letting him off the hook [16] Cast a brick to attract jade [17] Catch the ringleader to nab the bandits [18]	Use a woman to ensnare a man [31] Fling open the gates to the empty city [32] Let enemy's own spy sow discord in enemy camp [33]	Inflict injury on self to win enemy's trust [34] Chain together the enemy's warships [35] Run away [36]

## Global organization complicity facilitated by circulation of individuals "in the know"

**Complicity:** Given the commonality to their patterns of governance and their defences when confronted with inadequacies, it is appropriate to assume both a degree of common cause -- even complicity -- facilitated by the movement of individuals between them. The shared, revolving-door "culture" has notably become apparent through exposure of certain facts during investigation of the phone-hacking by the news organization:

- 10 of the Metropolitan police authority's 45 press officers were ex-employees of News International
- the CEO of News International met with the UK Prime Minister on some 26 occasions
- the executives of News Corp had ready access to 10 Downing Street -- even if they were asked to enter by the "back door"
- the UK Prime Minister hired executives of News International
- officers from the Metropolitan police authority were hired by News International

It is unclear what pattern of governance such complicity enables and what pattern it inhibits -- ensuring a degree of systemic neglect. To what does such a degree of "exchange" -- complicity -- between global organizations lead in a knowledge-based society?

**Secret societies:** Especially intriguing is the relative lack of mention of the role of [Freemasonry](#) in the context of the phone-hacking scandal -- notably by the Parliamentary Select Committee. The scandal occurs within a context in which:

- efforts had been made by government to require that police officers reveal whether they are freemasons after almost two-thirds refused to cooperate with an official study of membership of the secretive society (Jamie Wilson, *Police ignore freemason survey*, *The Guardian*, 29 July 2000)
- MPs had been required to declare their involvement with the freemasons (Martin Bright, *MPs told to declare links to Masons*, *The Observer*, 12 June 2005)
- rulings requiring that the judiciary declare their links to Freemasonry had been ignored (Helen Pidd, *Freemasons shake off ruling on judiciary*, *The Guardian*, 5 November 2009)

With respect to the phone-hacking scandal, the private investigator [Jonathan Rees](#) is alleged to have become a freemason who set up network of corrupt police, customs officials, taxmen and bank staff to gain valuable information; he then exploited his link with the lodges to meet masonic police officers who illegally sold him information which he peddled to Fleet Street (Nick Davies, *Phone-hacking scandal: Jonathan Rees obtained information using dark arts*, *The Guardian*, 8 June 2011; *Freemasons in the police*, January 1997). It is this network which is alleged to lie at the heart of the claim in the House of Commons by Labour MP Tom Watson that Rees was targeting politicians, members of the royal family and even terrorist informers on behalf of Rupert Murdoch's [News International](#).

In the case of other global organizations, conspiracy theorists frequently point to the possible role of other [secret\(ive\) societies](#) operating behind the scenes and beyond the capacities of democratic oversight (YouTube video of *JFK Speech on Secret Societies and Freedom of*

*the Press*; Ben Norris, *Did The Kennedy Speech on No Secret Societies Seal His Fate?*; Bill Crouse, *Conspiracies, Hidden Agendas, Secret Societies, and World Government*; Jerry Russell and Richard Stanley, *Psychopaths, Secret Societies and the New World Order*). The wider implications of the "unsaid", in all its variety, have been discussed separately (*Global Strategic Implications of the Unsaid*, 2003; *Varieties of the Unsaid in sustaining psycho-social community*, 2003).

## Reframing "monkeying" in terms of Knight's move patterns

The framework above suggests further possibilities by combining insights from mathematics, from Chinese philosophy, and from playing strategy games, notably chess and the Japanese game of *go*, as previously discussed. The possibility is that the framework, or an elaboration and interpretation of it, constitutes a kind of "container" for information games (*Hyperspace Clues to the Psychology of the Pattern that Connects -- in the light of the 81 Tao Te Ching insights*, 2003). These imply the openness or concealment typical of confidence games and confidence tricks typical of the business of information and of many transactions -- including interpersonal relationships.

The monkey theme above, through "monkeying", recalls the strange expression of "throwing a monkey" -- originally a "monkey wrench" -- as a means of sabotaging due process. The form of a monkey wrench, and the powerful twisting it enables, is also a reminder of the strange non-linearity of the knight's move in chess. This then relates to the strategic preoccupations in chess of mathematician Ronald Atkin, as mentioned above -- and to the possibility of higher orders of "twistedness" (*Twistedness in Psycho-social Systems challenge to logic, morality, leadership and personal development*, 2004; *Engaging with Questions of Higher Order: cognitive vigilance required for higher degrees of twistedness*, 2004).

**Knight's move:** As discussed in another context (*Navigating the psychological forces of "communication space"*, 2003), the knight's move in chess is especially interesting given their potential significance as the moves of a knight -- as a "noble" rather than as a "commoner". The strangeness of the knight's move (a *keima* in the Japanese game of *go*), and its numerical symbolism, has traditionally been the focus of hypotheses connecting the origins and structure of chess with secret magical and religious rituals of ancient India.

In their study of its significance, James E. Loder and W. Jim Neidhardt (*The Knight's Move: the relational logic of the spirit in theology and science*, 1992) focus on the expression of complementary thinking that facilitates positive interaction between science and Christian theology. A reviewer, Richard H Bube (*The "Strange Loop" of Complementarity*) notes:

The symbol of 'the Knight's move' refers to the unique move of the chess piece that is the only one not moving in a straight line, as an indicator of a leap of insight or a leap of faith. The book also draws heavily on the symbolism of the *Moebius strip*, the two-dimensional 'strange loop' twisted in the middle, which has a two-dimensional surface that can be totally traversed with continuous motion along the strip.

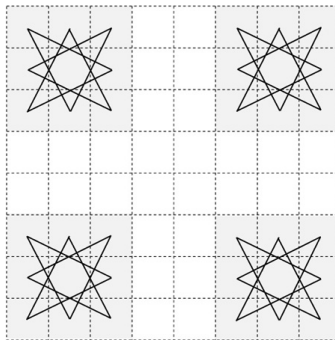
The move of the knight is used as a metaphor for the unexpected, and illogical, connections between ideas -- invisible to the "commoner". Sidney Cohen described LSD perception as a kind of knight's-move thinking which leaps over logical premises and formal syllogisms. "Knight's move thinking" is even considered a pathological condition of thought disorder denoting a lack of connection between ideas -- an illogicality of the loosening of associations (found in schizophrenia but to be contrasted with the flight of ideas which characterizes hypomania). Strategically it is however appreciated as an out-flanking manoeuvre.

Relevant to the argument here, the knight is part of the emblem for the *US Psyops* as a traditional symbol of "special operations" -- signifying the ability to influence all types of warfare.

**"Monkey dynamics"?** The table above offers a 3x3 pattern, possibly extended to a 4x4 pattern. Within these patterns various "information operations" are carried out. Rather than understanding these to be confined to a single cell within such a pattern, a notably feature of "monkeying" -- as with the knight's move -- is the capacity to switch unpredictably between cells. It is this switch which is fundamental to confidence tricks, illogicality and creativity -- "side stepping" expectations and "shifting ground", as exemplified by "sleight of hand" and "dodgy arguments". This circumvents conventional expectations of linearity and exemplifies strategic cunning. In argument it can be understood as a *non sequitur* invoking a higher order of connectivity, notably characteristic of humour -- as with the *punch line* of a joke (*Humour and Play-Fullness: essential integrative processes in governance, religion and transdisciplinarity*, 2005). It is also characteristic of various "correspondences" (*Theories of Correspondences -- and potential equivalences between them in correlative thinking*, 2007).

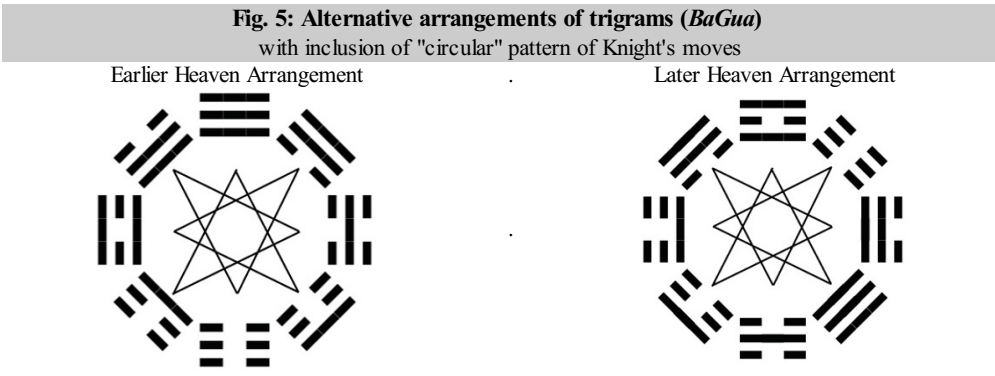
It is therefore interesting to look at the way the knight's move might be applied within a 3x3 pattern. The alternative possibilities of those 3x3 moves as a subset of a 4x4 pattern can be tentatively indicated by the following. This 8x8 pattern, shared by the conventional chess board for which the knight's move is known, then suggests 4 distinct instances of the 3x3 pattern.

**Fig. 4: Distinction between 3x3 patterns variously positioned within a 4x4 context (held within an 8x8 framework)**



**Especially intriguing is the manner in which the knight's move engenders a complex form of "circularity" within each 3x3 pattern -- as a result of a succession of creatively, illogical movements.** It effectively "dances around" a central attractor or hole -- rendering it, to a degree, explicit. This recalls the determining function of the q-hole of Atkin's analysis of patterns of communication and comprehension. Given the special significance attached to "knight" in Freemasonry, the rose-like form of the 3x3 patterns is curiously reminiscent (within the 8x8 pattern as a whole) of the Knight of the Rose-Croix -- the 18th degree of Freemasonry.

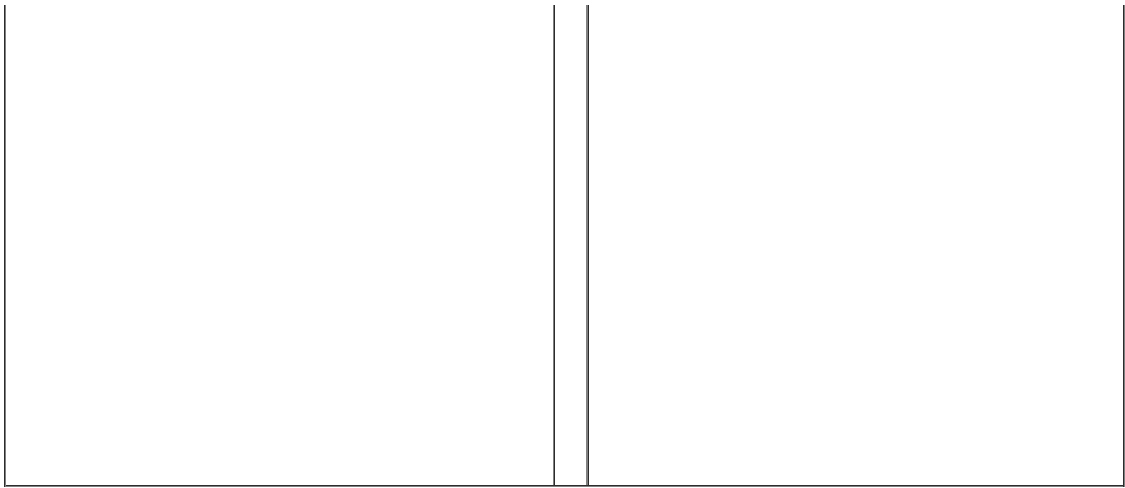
Given the importance traditionally attached to the classic Chinese 8-fold *Ba Gua*, the 8 trigrams could potentially be associated with a subset of the 4x4 monkey representation (above), namely as a 3x3 "monkey pattern" with an empty centre. Potentially this then extends the meaning of the dynamics between the cells of the monkey representation as a container for the dynamics of meaning, its manipulation and its transformation. With respect to the 4x4 representation, the implications can be taken further in that the 3x3 pattern can be understood as moving dynamically through the 4x4 space as indicated below. It is interesting that both the 3x3 and the 4x4 patterns offer frames for the "illogical", non-linear, "tricky" moves or ploys that are to be expected in knowledge society -- notably as exemplified by the global cases cited.



As might be expected, these *BaGua* patterns are variously danced to render the dynamics more comprehensible -- notably in relation to the movements of *Tai chi chuan*, as an internal martial art. Forms of "Knight's dance" are also to be expected. Of particular interest in this respect is the work on eliciting recognition of patterns through dance by Alison Laurie Neilson (*Disrupting Privilege, Identity, and Meaning: a reflexive dance of environmental education*, 2006).

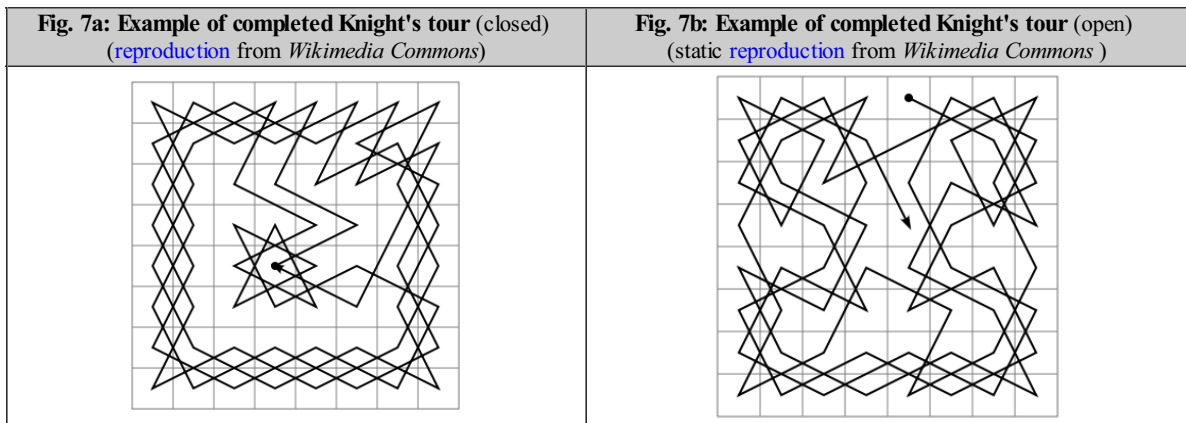
The exploration of "monkey dynamics" offers the delightful possibility that the "three monkeys" could be usefully encoded by the three lines of a *BaGua* trigram -- one line for each "monkey". The transformations between the eight such forms then offer a representation of the complexity of those dynamics. "Monkeying around" is then neatly represented by that movement -- "dancing around" as indicated experimentally in the following animation. This is reproduced from *Animation of Classical BaGua Arrangements* (2008), which has other representations and commentary. Appropriately it is then the quality of comprehension which distinguishes between the confusion of "monkey dynamics" and the dynamic coherence that that dynamic can imply -- through recognition of the pattern.

<b>Fig. 6: Indicative representation of "monkey dynamics"</b> (note if the SWF format animations do not display automatically, they may do so more readily in Internet Explorer)		
<b>Earlier Heaven Arrangement</b> Rotating anti-clockwise	xx	<b>Earlier Heaven Arrangement</b> Rotating clockwise

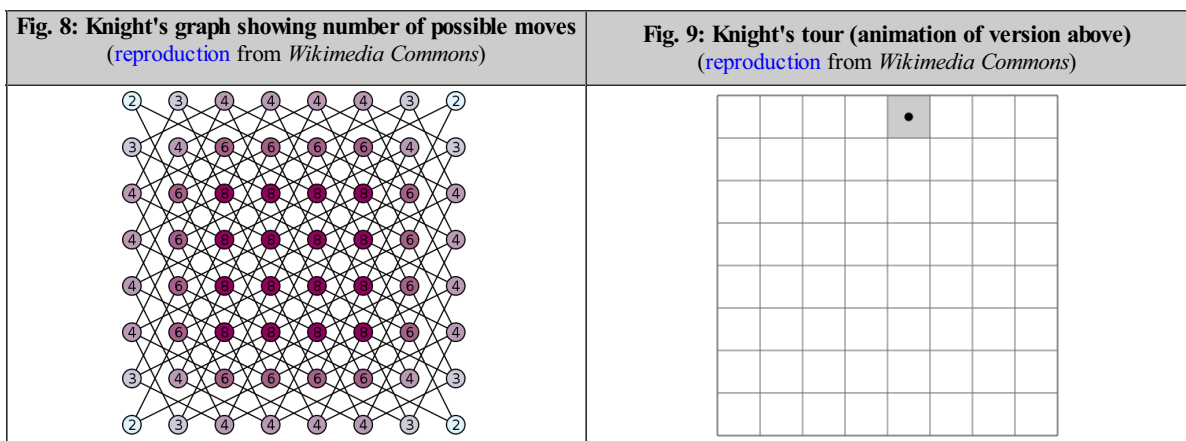


**Knight's tour:** For any rectangular pattern of cells, this is the path traced out by movement of the knight between the cells such that all cells are "visited" As discussed below, this is suggestive of learning implications within a knowledge society. Variants of the problem are well-known as the [travelling salesman problem](#).



As a mathematical challenge, the problem of the [knight's tour](#) on traditional 64-board in chess was solved by Euler in 1759. Knight's tour and knight's path are special cases of Hamiltonian cycles and Hamiltonian paths in graph theory [see [Hamiltonian cycle problem](#)]. In August 2003 it was [announced](#) that one of the classical unsolved problems of mathematics, concerning the existence of a path that could be traversed by a knight on an empty numbered 8x8 chessboard, had been proven to be without solution.

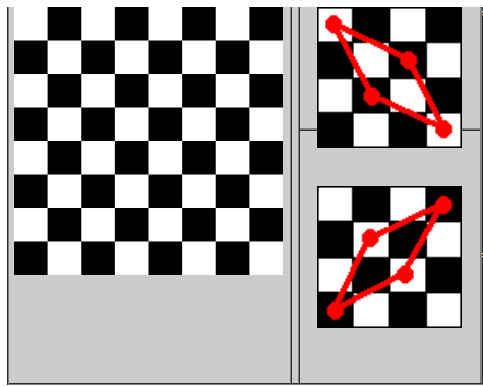


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A very helpful [introduction](#) is available on the possibilities of the tour within an 8x8 pattern on the appropriately titled *Grey Matters: Mental Gym* site ([Knight's Tour](#), October 2010). This distinguishes 2 unique patterns (diamond and square), each with 2 possible orientations -- namely [4 distinct patterns](#) -- which can manifest in any of the 4 quadrants of the 8x8 pattern.

<p><b>Fig. 10: Patterns of moves</b></p>	
<p>Normal 8x8 chessboard pattern</p>	<p>4 Patterns of Knight movement</p>
	



Using patterns it becomes clear that, from certain points, it is possible to move from one pattern in a given quadrant to the same pattern in another quadrant. This makes it possible to complete an entire system of patterns of one type within the 8x8 framework before moving onto the next pattern system. Since each pattern (and thus, each system of patterns of that type) uses up squares not employed in the others, this constantly leaves open only legal knight moves.

With this approach, the basic way that the knight's tour is completed -- following selection of any given square as the starting point -- is as follows:

1. Note which pattern that the knight is in -- diamond or square, right-handed or left-handed
2. Complete all the spaces in that system (for example, if starting in a left-hand diamond pattern, complete all four left-hand diamonds within the 8x8 pattern)
3. Move to any pattern system of the opposite shape. namely:
  - having completed an entire square system, start working on either one of the diamond patterns
  - or, having completed an entire diamond system, start working on either one of the square systems.
4. Once two such full systems are complete, namely 32 squares of the 8x8 pattern, commence with a system of the opposite shape -- the same shape used first, but of the opposite orientation. Thus:
  - having started with a left-handed diamond, and then completed either one of the square systems, now initiate a right-handed diamond.
  - or, having started with a left-handed square, and then completed either one of the diamond systems, now initiate a right-handed square.
5. Having completed three systems, the final pattern may then be initiated to complete the tour

In summary, the process involves shifting from a diamond system to a square system, and vice versa. Following completion of the system, shift to a system of the opposite shape. This process is repeated until all 64 squares have been visited. It is however vital to ensure, when shifting from quadrant to quadrant, that the pattern is completed in a way that ensures the possibility of shifting into the next quadrant. The whole procedure above is further clarified by an excellent video at [MindMagician.org](http://MindMagician.org). Reference is made to the Knight's graph (Fig. 8 above), as identifying a [Danger zone](#).

**Fibonacci pattern as a container:** In reviewing Donald Rumsfeld's above-mentioned strategic "poem", these possibilities can be further associated with the relation of knowledge to action as previously discussed (*Unknown Undoing: challenge of incomprehensibility of systemic neglect*, 2008). The argument with respect to such patterns was developed with respect to the 4-fold quadgrams as a means of ordering (information) strategies in the light of the *Tao Te Ching* and *T'ai Hsüan Ching* (*Strategic Patterns in terms of Knowing, Feeling and Action -- using an alternative Chinese perspective*, 2008).

To the extent that a knowledge-society implies the dynamics of learning as well as the interactions between those with different knowledge skills, preferences and capacities, the question of how to comprehend the relationship between patterns of greater or lesser complexity becomes relevant. Of particular relevance is the extent to which simplicity may imply unarticulated complexity and the extent to which detailed articulation may obscure global dynamics. It is in these respects that the construction of the Fibonacci spiral offers a valuable container holding (comprehensibly) different degrees of complexity as discussed separately (*Tao of Engagement -- Weaponised Interactions and Beyond: Fibonacci's magic carpet of games to be played for sustainable global governance*, 2010; *Designing Global Self-governance for the Future*, 2010).

## Engendering confidence and identity within learning / action cycles

The patterns above point to the value of engaging in new ways with "learning cycles" to counteract the vulnerability potentially resulting from inadequate learning.

**Geometry of meaning:** Of particular interest with respect to the relationship between 3-fold and 4-fold patterns is the work of Arthur Young (*Geometry of Meaning*, 1978) in the light of his experience in the development of the Bell helicopter. Clearly the scope for "monkeying around" with a helicopter in flight -- and surviving -- is limited. Young focused at length on the nature of the learning cycle in elaborating what he terms a "Rosetta Stone" of meaning (*Characteristics of phases in learning / action cycles*). This is "not just a translation of meaning, but is a generation of meaning. It is the relationships between the words we must use, not their definitions, that give them their meaning" (p. 38). With respect to the learning cycle, he distinguishes four basic categories of **act**, **relationship** and **state** that he interrelates as follows:

**Fig. 11: Basis of Rosetta Stone of Meaning** (according to Arthur Young)

Relationship	Act	State
<i>impulse (purpose)</i>	<i>spontaneous act</i>	<i>being</i>
<i>faith</i>	<i>change (reaction)</i>	<i>transformation</i>
<i>knowledge (form)</i>	<i>observation</i>	<i>significance</i>
<i>fact</i>	<i>control</i>	<i>establishment</i>

His approach has been variously and tentatively adapted and explored as follows:

- *Typology of 12 complementary strategies essential to sustainable development*, 1998
- *Cycles of dissonance and resonance*
- *Typology of 12 complementary dialogue modes essential to sustainable dialogue*

**Periodic table of knowing:** The [periodic table of chemical elements](#) has been variously recognized as a fundamental container for ordering the natural elements. The framework has been generalized by [Edward Haskell](#) to encompass psychosocial categories (*Generalization of the structure of Mendeleev's periodic table*, 1972). That approach has been used in a *Functional Classification in an Integrative Matrix of Human Preoccupations* (1982).

The approach might be further developed with respect to ordering education, ways of knowing, and as a "periodic table of cognitive skills", as variously argued:

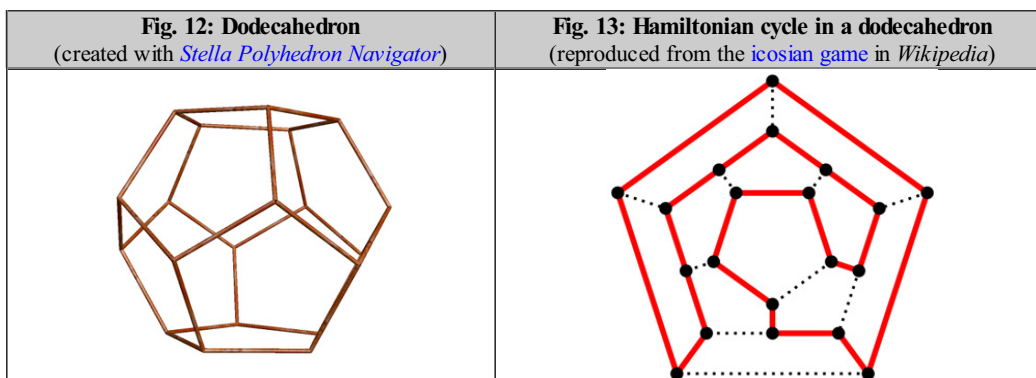
- *Periodic Pattern of Human Knowing: implication of the Periodic Table as metaphor of elementary order* (2009)
- *Periodic Pattern of Human Life: the Periodic Table as a metaphor of lifelong learning* (2009). This suggests the possibility of a richer patterning of the stages of life and the contrasting cognitive modalities associated with those stages
- *Towards a Periodic Table of Ways of Knowing -- in the light of metaphors of mathematics* (2009). This suggests that human cognitive investment in mathematics may imply forms of insight of greater subtlety and complexity which may only be progressively recognized
- *Tuning a Periodic Table of Religions, Epistemologies and Spirituality -- including the sciences and other belief systems* (2007). By relating the challenging of ordering such a table to the process of musical tuning, this places an emphasis on the use of another sense in recognizing any emergent harmony.

An advantage of such a periodic-table container is the manner in which it potentially gives explicit recognition to a minimal, essential set of insights -- emphasizing the requisite variety for cognitive survival -- whilst enabling recognition of engagement with insights and modalities of greater subtlety. A periodic table notably provides an ordering framework for the diversity of cognitive style and intelligences with an implication of their potential development (*Systems of Categories Distinguishing Cultural Biases*, 1993).

## Learning through Hamiltonian cycles and pathways

In the light of the above argument, it is appropriate to note various ways in which the Hamiltonian cycle is explored in relation to learning (for example: Ali Eshragh, et al., *Hamiltonian Cycle Problem and Cross Entropy: passing through the nodes by learning*, 2008; Dana Angluina and Jiang Chen, *Learning a hidden graph using  $O(\log n)$  queries per edge*, *Journal of Computer and System Sciences*, 2008; Wieslaw Sienko and Wieslaw Citko, *Hamiltonian Neural Networks Based Networks for Learning*, *InTech*, January 2009).

Separately the potential value of polyhedra in relation to governance and thinking has been discussed (*Polyhedral Empowerment of Networks through Symmetry: psycho-social implications for organization and global governance*, 2008; *Geometry of Thinking for Sustainable Global Governance*, 2009). Of relevance to this argument is that the theory of [Hamiltonian paths](#) was first developed with respect to platonic polyhedra when represented as graphs.



With respect to "learning", much is made of finding a Hamiltonian path, notably "learning a hidden subgraph". It is less evident that learning pathways are identified -- for purposes of education -- using insights from Hamiltonian pathways and cycles. The issue might be framed in terms of a matrix of topics to be learned -- as with some presentations of a curriculum -- with the challenge being to determine a fruitful pathway through all of them, as in the travelling salesman problem. The topics are then effectively "boxes to be ticked" -- with learning as a matter of "hitting all the spots". The arguments above for framing learning in terms of a "periodic table" can be understood in such terms.

Where the topics are such that they can only be deeply learned by being repeatedly "revisited", the concern then switches to the relevance of Hamiltonian cycles. With respect to governance and collective learning this revisiting can be recognized in the adage of [Georges](#)

**Sanatayana:** "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it". A potentially deeper form of learning is articulated in the much-cited verse of **T. S. Eliot:** "And the end of all our exploring. Will be to arrive where we started. And know it for the first time."

With regard to vulnerability to creative "monkeying", exemplified by the non-linear "trickiness" of the knight's move, it is the resulting cyclic patterns presented schematically in Fig. 4 which can then be understood as the central learning challenge. Failure to develop "streetwise" skills in response to such "monkeying" ensures vulnerability to those skilled in such trickiness -- as in chess and *go*. Of particular interest is the manner in which the skills of fencing and quarterstaff offer metaphors for such psychosocial skills as separately discussed (*Modelling: authentic dialogue and quarterstaff combat?*, 2003). The "philosophy" integral to fencing has long explored patterns of defence and attack, widely valued as indications of strategic postures (*The Book of Five Rings*).

The challenge becomes especially evident in relation to vicious cycles at the interpersonal or the collective level (*Dysfunctional Cycles and Spirals: web resources on "breaking the cycle"*, 2002). Acquiring cognitive streetwise skills then merits exploration in terms of detecting Hamiltonian cycles and paths in behavioural dynamics.

This could well include the preoccupations of **transactional analysis** and the challenges addressed by **argument mapping**. Ironically, rather than the travelling salesman problem, it is a matter of "seeing through" the salesman's manipulative lines of argument and focus switching -- a challenge similar to that of decoding the discourse of politicians or of charismatic leaders of manipulative sects (possibly then described as **deprogramming**). Ironically, whilst advertising and marketing campaigns of every kind are readily characterized as "monkey business", advertisers are more attentive to feedback on their questionable use of primates in the process (*Less Monkey Business in Advertising, But Nonetheless Entertaining; Memo to Adland: Enough With the Monkey Business*)

Hamiltonian cycles offer a formalization of the learning challenge -- then to be understood as finding a Hamilton cycle in a network of interrelated topics. An integrative comprehension of a subject area and its set of topics is, from this perspective, intimately related to internalization of knowledge of a Hamiltonian pathway or cycle -- in effect "knowing one's way around". The circularity resulting from the pattern of *non sequiturs* offers a contrast between "meta-education" and the linear progression (of "*sequiturs*") implied by "higher education", as separately discussed (*Higher Education  $\infty$  Meta-education ?* 2011).

Ironically, just as confidence can be built up in the ability to solve a formal Hamiltonian problem in mathematics, the more fundamental form of existential confidence is developed through the ability to transcend the behavioural cycles characterized by combinations of "monkeying" dynamics. Such transcendence -- "seeing" the path or the cycle -- then relates to that of recognizing a behavioural pattern. It is also a central theme of Atkin's q-analysis. It is in this sense that identity is emergent through a form of maturation of cognition -- through "embodying together" the dynamics of the "monkeys" (*Emergence of Cyclical Psycho-social Identity: sustainability as "psychically" defined*, 2007). The wisdom of the "three wise monkeys" is then implicit in the integration of those dynamics -- thereby transcending their problematic individual functions and the vulnerabilities they enable.

The cyclic framing of emergent confidence and identity in this way is appropriate to their subtlety as experienced. In the light of the above argument, this then justifies further reflection on the nature of "circulation" within such learning cycles, as variously discussed (*Circulation of the Light: essential metaphor of global sustainability?* 2010; *Enabling Moral Currency Circulation: reframing a stimulus package to avert moral bankruptcy*, 2010; *Potential Misuse of the Conveyor Metaphor: recognition of the circular dynamic essential to its appropriate operation*, 2007).

## **Systemic avoidance in global governance and collective learning: the "fourth monkey"**

The above argument highlights vulnerability to "monkeying around" as a consequence of what has been criticized as "subunderstanding" by Magoroh Maruyama (*Polyocular Vision or Subunderstanding, Organization Studies*, 2004). When the "monkeying around" is a feature of the operation of global institutions, beyond the issues of exploitation (noted above), the consequence is one of dangerous systemic neglect.

A feature of this neglect is a systemic approach to governance which deliberately or inadvertently neglects an adequately comprehensive system perspective. Through implying, misleadingly, that a subsystem approach is responsibly "comprehensive", governance then exposes itself to those inherently irresponsible "monkey dynamics" able to exploit denial and avoidance. This out-manoeuvres and undermines efforts at integrative global governance. This argument has been separately explored (*Lipoproblems: Developing a Strategy Omitting a Key Problem -- the systemic challenge of climate change and resource issues*, 2009).

The emphasis above has been on the nature of the learning required to transcend "monkey dynamics" -- a possibility implied by the emergent wisdom of the "three wise monkeys" collectively.

Dramatically significant at the time of writing are:

- resource-related issues such as food production and distribution, water, land, energy, and related concerns with refugees, shelter, employment and health. These are all readily to be understood as exacerbated by an ever-increasing world population. Through skilled avoidance mechanisms this possibility cannot be effectively debated, being framed as an unquestionable "demand" to which a resource response must necessarily be found. There is no discussion of how that "demand" might be constrained, or even of how such discussion might be fruitfully organized.
- increasing public debt of many countries, most notably the "most powerful country in the world". There is again little capacity to address the issue of how that debt might be reduced -- its increase being understood as intimately related to a growth model itself intimately dependent on population increase to ensure growth of markets and the necessary resources for social safety nets. To avoid default, the "solutions" proposed employ a characteristic of "monkey dynamics", namely transferring the debt further into

the future -- a neat mix of creative accounting, creative legality and spin. Remember *Recipe for Disaster: the formula that killed Wall Street* (*Wired*, 17.03, March 2009)?

It is from this perspective that the "wisdom" of the seldom-mentioned "fourth wise monkey" merits careful attention. Traditionally, when portrayed, that monkey has its arms crossed to signify inaction or the withholding of action -- effectively a characteristic of systemic neglect. This might well be associated with new insight into the feverish pursuit of "growth" at all costs to quality of life and the environment. Here the fourth monkey is true to the dynamics of "monkeying around" unwisely.

A range of initiatives currently use the "fourth monkey" as a symbol. It has been framed as the goal of a spiritual quest. It is advocated as the basis for a campaign (*The Fourth Monkey: Law Students Can Use the RTI to a Devastative Effect, Infocracy India*, 19 March 2011). More provocatively however, the fourth monkey is occasionally portrayed with its arms (or hands) covering its genitals. Originally published by the [Research Foundation for Governance: in India](#), one account of the significance of the "fourth monkey" is offered by Rupa Chilukuri (*The Fourth Monkey: Exploring Positive Thinking*, 24 November 2009), following exposure to an image "with hands strategically placed in the Adam and Eve fig leaf position". For Chilukuri this signified "thinking beyond negative thoughts".

However the strategic positioning could also be fruitfully understood as a form of "wisdom" responsive -- responsibly -- to the consequences of population growth in a resource constrained society. The dynamics of governance neglectful of the "fourth monkey" can then be appropriately described as "screwing around".

**Fig. 14: The Fourth Wise Monkey**



Poem dedicated to *The Fourth Monkey*  
(concluding verse)

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*With a sly grin upon his face  
This monkey sits  
Upright and true,  
With his hands covering  
His private place,  
So no evil,  
Shall come to you.*

## Conclusion

Is it to be assumed that corporate governance, at the highest level amongst major global institutions, is characterized by the same kind of systemic ignorance? As with the three major examples cited, this would then contribute directly to the erosion of credibility of global governance -- and of governance in general, as previously discussed (*Abuse of Faith in Governance: Mystery of the Unasked Question*, 2009).

"Monkeying around" is then an appropriate description of the current condition of global misleadership. Ironically, those who have long assumed that they have a primary role as "organ grinders" making the music by which the monkeys dance, now find themselves deprecated as having been demoted to the role of a "monkey".

The "wisdom" of the monkeys emerges when they function together as a system -- beyond conventional human sensibility. In that mode they collectively "see through", "hear a subtler harmony", "speak otherwise", and act according to the classic taoist tale of [Chuang Tzu](#) as a butcher. The latter insight into harmony has been cited with respect to the distinctive mark of China as a new global power ([Vladimir Maliavi](#), *Zhuang-zi's Concept of Harmony and Its Cultural Implications*, 7 July 2010). Acting separately, the monkeys are only too skilled at exposing systemic vulnerabilities to which the unwise fail to attend. In a remarkably insightful commentary on the *Wu Wei* attitude central to Taoism (under the title *Monkeying Around*, [Reference.com](#), 2009), it is noted that [Benjamin Hoff](#) in *The Tao of Pooh* (1982) suggests that "Wei" means monkey/claw, and translates "Wu Wei" as "No Monkeying Around".

The argument has exploited both conventional and classical frameworks for reasons previously outlined (*Enhancing the Quality of Knowing through Integration of East-West metaphors*, 2000). Use of the set of four monkeys as a means of indicating the possibility of emergent collective wisdom is of course an artifice. Curiously, as might be expected, the set has been exploited to hypothesize the existence of a "fifth monkey". One such might be seen in relation to a "fifth discipline" in constraining "monkey dynamics" ([Peter M. Senge](#), *The Fifth Discipline: the art and practice of the learning organization*, 1990). It is however curious that there is no depiction of a monkey holding its nose -- the organ through which corruption is detected and with which intuition is most closely associated.

The argument above has explored the possibility of creating a kind of dynamic container for the confidence and trust which has been central to discussion about the failures of global governance, most notably in the case of the financial system. It has been central to commentary on the worldwide clerical abuse of children. It was evident in the UK with respect to the scandal of MPs expenses and now in relation to the complicity of politicians with a major news organization, itself complicit with the police. In a commentary on "the cliché of our trust being betrayed", [Madeleine Bunting](#) argues this derives more from an inability to discuss basic values (*Our crisis is not about trust: it's that we no longer agree on basic values*, *The Guardian*, 25 July 2011). This highlights fundamental assumptions regarding the possibility of agreement and even of viable governance (*The Consensus Delusion*, 2011; *Ungovernability of Sustainable Global Democracy?* 2011). The argument above focuses on a more dynamic approach to both "agreement" and "governability".

A case has been made for recognizing pathways and cycles underlying what appear as "monkeying" dynamics. Such recognition would offer a valuable approach to learning in order to counter the experience of vulnerability (*Interweaving Thematic Threads and Learning Pathways*, 2010). The integrative learning associated with such "weaving" of pathways then justifies reference to the "magical" nature of the "empowered" insight implied by the wisdom of the monkeys "acting in concert" (*Magic Carpets as Psychoactive System Diagrams*,

2010).

The dynamics of "monkeying" in an information society -- exploiting patterns of knowledge and ignorance, as simulated in many strategy board games -- calls for more careful attention to how to respond individually and collectively to the unknown. Is openness and transparency to be universally valued in all circumstances? When is secretiveness and restrictiveness appropriate? The quest for openness in a global system is universally undermined by the challenges of [information overload](#) and the consequent pattern of information underuse, boding ill for the future (*Emerging Memetic Singularity in the Global Knowledge Society*, 2009).

A more dynamic approach to "opening" and "closing" merits attention, as highlighted by [Orrin E. Klapp](#) (*Opening and Closing: strategies of information adaptation in society*, 1978). The coding system characteristic of the trigrams of the *Ba Gua* and of the hexagrams of the *I Ching* is highly suggestive of ways of reframing different styles of openness and closedness -- and the dynamically transformative relationship between them (*Transformation Metaphors -- derived experimentally from the Chinese Book of Changes (I Ching) for sustainable dialogue, vision, conferencing, policy, network, community and lifestyle*, 1997).

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