



**SIGMA**

**S**ystematizing **I**magination to support **G**oals **M**anagement & **A**ction



# Working with Values: Software of the Mind

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*A Systematic and Practical Account  
of Purpose, Value and Obligation  
in Organizations and Society.*

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**Warren Kinston**

**The Original Reference Text as used by Consultants in  
SIGMA:  
THE CENTRE FOR TRANSDISCIPLINARY SCIENCE**

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*Who is wise? He who learns from everyone.*

The Talmud.



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## Preface

I wrote this book primarily to give myself and my close colleagues the essential knowledge required for our consultations which often dealt with values, objectives and obligations. It therefore assumes a basic appreciation of the way people function, organizations are managed and society works; and the material has been presented in a compressed, summarized form not unlike a text-book.

Publication is now timely because I have reached the conclusion that my distinctions and formulations are sufficiently correct to be useful, even though some may require further refinement. Despite this, I am sure to have made errors of fact, produced some unsatisfactory accounts and offered some faulty or partial analyses. Undoubtedly, my own cultural biases have crept in despite attempts to be dispassionate.

Although I have tried to present a comprehensive account, I am aware of unanswered questions and puzzling relationships that I have had to leave unexplored. Representing human experience, inner and outer, is a new phase of the scientific enterprise. We have much to learn. Properties in this creative and subjective realm are not quite like those in the physical realm. As you would expect, trans-disciplinary inquiry and knowledge follow different rules from conventional disciplinary endeavours.

Practical testing and critical reflection over a lengthy period have given me confidence that something universal and significant has been discovered. I feel quite certain that the overall patterns of hierarchies, groupings and channels are valid because I and others have found them in a variety of other unrelated areas of human functioning.

In helping me along my path, I am grateful to the work of innumerable scholars and thinkers over the centuries and social scientists in recent times. There are so many whose ideas have become so much part of me that it has been impossible to refer to them all specifically in the text or notes.

I recognise the impetus given by colleagues at Brunel University where this book was first conceived. I am indebted to Elliott Jaques who invited me there, to Jimmy Algie who provided the nucleus notion and freely shared his wealth of ideas, and to Ralph Rowbottom who not only impressed the need for rigour in analysing social concepts but also good-naturedly tolerated my first fumbling definitions and helped me refine and apply them. Gillian Stamp, Tim Packwood and others generously read and commented on early drafts of various chapters. Over the subsequent years many have helped me in my work. It is impossible to name them all, but I am especially grateful to Anne Bosanquet, Ian Johnston, David Wilshire and Nick Bosanquet. Clients too, through individual discussions and in workshops, offered many stimulating suggestions.

Two people must be singled out for special appreciation. Stephen Sinnott provided continual encouragement over several years, not only by overcoming my doubts that the task was feasible and that I could complete it, but also by making insightful suggestions on several occasions when I became stuck. Verity Goitein provided unfailing support and enthusiasm from start to finish. She willingly read and re-read, criticized and re-criticized drafts of every chapter; and her consultancy projects served as an invaluable testing-ground for many of the ideas. Naturally, unevenness, mistakes and poor writing remain my own responsibility.

*Warren Kinston, 1995*





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