

**Operant Subjectivity**

*The International Journal of Q Methodology*

**Foreword to the Special Issue: Applications of  
Q Methodology to the Study of Popular Culture**

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This special issue is devoted to the application of Q methodology to the study of popular culture. As the studies in this issue make clear, the advantages of Q methodology are powerful when it comes to examining audience reactions to various expressions of popular culture. The study by Hedges examines audience perceptions of gender identity in the television show, *Survivor*. Also, from the realm of television, Zenor looks at reactions to the particular style of humor offered in *Family Guy*. In the area of popular film, Robinson, Callahan and Evans look at the genre of horror films, and what it is that keeps fans of this genre coming back for more frights. Robison and Rhoads use the film, *Manic*, which involves troubled youths in an institutional setting, to study reactions of criminal justice students. Somerstein uses Q methodology to study aesthetic preference with regard to paintings and photographs, and McKenzie and Brown study musical preferences as expressions of *forms of life*.

These articles contribute to a growing literature of popular culture studies which employ Q methodology. Additionally, panels devoted to Q and popular culture have been a feature of the last two meetings of the *International Society for the Scientific Study of Subjectivity*, in Pittsburgh and Amsterdam.

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