

## ***News, Notes & Comment***

### ***Q-Method Email Network Begins***

An electronic mail *conference* (aka. list, network, bulletin board, hotline) on Q methodology began on a temporary basis under the name QTemp on January 14, 1991 (see *OS*, January 1991, p. 86), just as Operation Desert Storm was beginning. QTemp was superseded on March 1, 1992 by Q-Method, the change in name signifying the change in status from a temporary to a permanent list. The new network was advertised as follows over New-List@ndsuvml, a list devoted to announcements of new lists:

Q-Method is an unmoderated list for the discussion of all aspects of Q methodology as innovated and developed by the late William Stephenson (1902-1989). Q methodology is a broad approach to the study of subjectivity, and includes issues of theory, conceptualization, measurement, and analysis. Topics for discussion may therefore range from the Q-sort technique to Q factor analysis to broader concerns about the nature of subjectivity. Q methodology has been applied in psychology, communication, political science, advertising, education, law, health and medicine, and many other fields. Discussion may therefore be expected to be diverse with respect to illustration while unified with respect to methodological principles. (Q-Method began March 1, 1992 and succeeds QTemp@kentvm, which was established as a temporary list on January 14, 1991.)

Archives of Q-Method back issues (including those previously stored under QTemp) can be listed by sending the command INDEX Q-METHOD to ListServ@kentvm or ListServ@kentvm.kent.edu in the *body* of e-mail.

To subscribe, send the following command to ListServ@kentvm (Bitnet) or ListServ@kentvm.kent.edu (Internet) in the *body* of mail or in an interactive message:

SUB Q-METHOD your full name

where "your full name" is your name. For example:

SUB Q-METHOD Raymond B. Cattell

Owner: Steven R. Brown <sbrown@kentvm> or <sbrown@kentvm.kent.edu>.

The name *Q-Method* was arrived at via Q sorting, modified by virtue of the constraints of electronic mail. Proposed new names were submitted over QTemp in early February, and a Q sample of N=27 names was eventually accumulated and resubmitted to QTemp subscribers, who were asked to sort them (in a Likert-type format) from best to worst.

The responses were Q factor analyzed (of course), and the first two unrotated factors seemed to hold the best chances for locating a consensual result. The character of the preponderant first factor is apparent in the first 10 highest choices (in rank order), all of which contain the letter Q:

Q-Method (or QMethod, QMeth-L), QNet (or QNet-L), QTalk, QTheory, Q-ISSSS (to note the tie with the International Society), QView, Q, QLog, QTech, QSubject.

The second factor was also strongly and purely defined, but contained far fewer respondents. Its character is also clear from the top 10 nominated titles, most of which are more personally reminiscent of William Stephenson:

QPlay, QWill, Janus, Operant, Q-Will, QView, Q-Method (or QMethod, QMeth-L), QLog, Will-Net, QTalk

Although the first factor emphasized descriptive clarity while the second was more overtly playful and sentimental, still *Q-Method* (or some variant) induced sufficient sentiment in the second factor to rank seventh on its list. No single name jumped out as obviously consensual, but four did achieve a modicum of support from the second factor and strong support in the first (normalized factor scores are shown below):

Q-Method, QMethod, QMeth-L	2.20	0.68
QTalk	1.31	0.49
QTheory	1.30	0.26
QView	0.84	0.85

Some variant of *Q-Method* was accepted as the best solution, and so the email list Q-Method went on-line March 1. Several

participants noted the ludenic character of the process itself (including a heavy dose of seriousness, which is one of the hallmarks of play), and averred how Stephenson would have enjoyed it.

### *Email Tutorial on Q Methodology*

In late September 1991, Q methodology was briefly discussed over the electronic conference on Qualitative Research for the Human Sciences emanating from the University of Georgia (QUALRS-L@uga). The discussion was resumed a month later and was elaborated more fully as different perspectives were introduced and clarified. One contributor asked if someone "could explain, in simple terms, exactly what Q methods are good for" so that he could determine "what they are going to tell me about a phenomenon that I cannot learn some other way."

This challenge was responded to over QUALRS-L by Steven Brown (Political Science, Kent State U) in a series of eight tutorials which are now available via electronic mail and in printed form. The series began in late November 1991 and lasted almost two months, and included the following chapters:

(1) *Background.* The differences in opinion expressed about Q over QUALRS-L are traced back to divergences which appeared in the factor analytic disputes of the 1930s, among such luminaries as Cyril Burt, William Stephenson, R.B. Cattell, Hans Eysenck, L.L. Thurstone, and others. The idea that Q and R are only to be differentiated on statistical grounds is challenged, and Q's role in a more comprehensive science of subjectivity is advanced.

(2) *Concourse Theory.* The idea of concourse is introduced as "the flow of communicability surrounding any topic," and is characterized as the source of creativity and identity formation in individuals, groups, organizations, and nations. Chosen for illustrative purposes are the comments made over QUALRS-L relative to the nature and scope of Q methodology itself -- e.g., "It allows us to sort patterns of speech among speakers," "Q factor analysis is a simple variation of factor analysis, actually component analysis," "Q methodology is a set of procedures, theory, and philosophy supporting the study of subjectivity," and so forth.

(3) *Q Samples.* From the concourse described previously, N=20 statements are drawn for the Q sample. The principles of Q-sample design are discussed, including complex cross-classifications, but ultimately the sample is structured into two cat-

egories -- technical and methodological, 10 statements representing each.

(4) *Q Sorting*. The principles and dynamics of Q sorting are illustrated in terms of 10 Q sorts, one representing the author's view and 9 others representing others' views (simulated) -- Stephenson, Burt and Cattell, Kerlinger, and persons who had expressed their views about Q on QUALRS-L, plus theoretical Q sorts representing a quantum-theoretical viewpoint and that version of Q most likely found in conventional textbook treatments.

(5) *Correlation*. The intercorrelation of Q sorts is demonstrated using the 10 theoretical responses constructed in the previous chapter. Due to the nature of the audience addressed (users of qualitative methods), the mathematics of correlation and standard errors are touched on only lightly, and note is made of the existence of software packages that can perform the necessary calculations.

(6) *Factor Analysis*. Discussion about factor analysis focuses mainly on theoretical rotation since the extraction of factors can now be routinely achieved via computer software packages. The final factor solution results in a major bipolar factor, with Burt, Cattell, and various contributors to QUALRS-L at one end and Stephenson, Brown, and a quantum-theoretical Q sort at the other. There is also a second, unipolar factor defined by the views of Kerlinger and another contributor to QUALRS-L.

(7) *Interpretation*. The calculation of factor weights and factor scores is briefly described, followed by a more extended discussion of factor interpretation. The bipolar factor pits the Burt-Cattell psychometric position found in most textbooks (that Q is simply the transpose of R) against the Stephenson-Brown position (that Q provides a quantum-theoretical foundation for subjective science). The third perspective is rooted in the variance-design properties of the Q sample (Kerlinger) and its susceptibility to hypothesis testing.

(8) *Bibliographic Conclusion*. An overview of recent applications plus a 66-entry reference section touches on William Stephenson's career, the study of single cases, the interbehaviorism of J.R. Kantor, the relationship of Q to quantum theory and postmodern developments, its use in oral history, and its application to such diverse topics as pornography, political campaigns, religion, and theories of justice. Various on-going research projects are also summarized. The series concludes with comments concerning the applicability of Q to qualitative research.

The manuscript, which runs in excess of 13,500 words, is obtainable free of charge by persons who are part of an electronic network linked either to Bitnet or Internet, or which can gain access to these networks through a gateway facility. The tutorial is available in four files maintained by Comserve (at Rensselaer Polytechnic University, Troy, NY). To receive these files, send electronic mail to Comserve@rpitsvm (Bitnet) or Comserve@vm.its.rpi.edu (Internet) containing the following four lines:

Send QMethod Part1  
Send QMethod Part2  
Send QMethod Part3  
Send QMethod Part4

No other words, punctuation, or symbols should appear in the message. The original transmissions are stored in the backlogs of both QUALRS-L@uga and Q-Method@kentvm.

Persons without access to electronic mail can obtain a slightly revised laser-printed copy (27 pages, single-spaced) by sending a check or money order for \$5.00 (made out to *Kent State University*) to Steven R. Brown, Department of Political Science, Kent State University, Kent, OH 44242-0001.

### ***Recent and Forthcoming Scholarship***

John L. Sullivan (Political Science, U Minnesota), Amy Fried, and Mary G. Dietz, "Patriotism, Politics, and the Presidential Election of 1988," *American Journal of Political Science*, 1992, 36, 200-234. *Abstract:* Recent circumstantial and journalistic evidence suggests that the patriotism issue may have helped George Bush win the 1988 election. Yet there has been little systematic scholarly assessment of the role patriotism plays in U.S. electoral politics. While there is a small empirical literature on patriotic attitudes, researchers have not availed themselves of recent scholarly work that treats patriotism as a historical concept with contested meanings. Within the framework of a historical-conceptual understanding of patriotism, we used Q methodology to collect data on patriotism perspectives from diverse groups of citizens and used the results of these studies to conduct an R methodology survey of a representative sample

from the community. Results of the survey show that people who understand patriotism symbolically, emotionally, or instinctively were particularly susceptible to George Bush's rhetorical appeals to patriotism and the flag. Indeed, these appeals had a strong influence on their vote choice, in favor of Bush. Voters who understood patriotism in alternative ways, however, were not induced by the Bush campaign's rhetorical strategy into voting for Bush for president.

Mary Margaret Pignone, *On Becoming a Global Citizen -- Praxis in Identity Politics: A Participatory Development Education Project*, doctoral dissertation, Department of Political Science, American University, 1992. *Abstract*: "Think globally, act locally" is a popularized call to action that, translated into praxis, entails overcoming the most central problems of social theory, namely, the micro/macro, agent/structure, public/private, and state/civil society dichotomies. This thesis is an attempt to meet that challenge by outlining an integrated approach to theory, method and practice within a social constructivist framework. Social theory is understood to be a relation of theories of agency, order and change. Adopted and adapted is a structurationist position that integrates identity theory into processes of motivation, interaction and structuring. It replaces rational choice theory with identification as a theory of motivation. It emphasizes the concept that "multiple identities comprise the self," proposing that the multiplicity of "ordering processes" entailed in overlapping role identities provides a dynamic for change. It draws on the concept of "representations" (as sustaining or changing social institutions in the dynamics of structuring processes *now*) as means of integrating the agent/structure dichotomy.

Order is understood as the management of multiple self-authorizing identity groups in articulation with one another which, discussed from the standpoint of public policy, reviews the relationship of state and civil society by proposing the concept of a nonsovereign state and sees civil society as the locus of citizen action in multiple policy arenas. By providing "social space" for communicative action across boundaries, social movements, as constitutive of order, make possible global/local identifications.

This approach was applied to a project of development education which established (via telecommunications media) a "discursive community" of persons across four countries engaged in

joint analysis of development policy and of their role identities as citizens. Fundamental to the pedagogy were methods of subjective science, namely, Q methodology, which enabled participants to define for themselves their own understandings of development and citizenship, and processes of participatory learning as means towards identification with preferred representations of policy, strategy and role. The Q study revealed a striking coherence of views among the participants as well as deep alienation of most participants from the policies of their country's government. Reflection underscored the value of Q method as a tool for critical theory and as an instrument for measuring and communicating role identities. The transnational dialogue confirmed theory expectations while identifying modifications needed to strengthen the process. Suggestions for research and practice flow from this praxis.

Gary C. Dickey, *A Q-methodological Coorientation Study of Internal Revenue Service Public Affairs Officers and Reporters on Federal Taxes*, master's thesis, College of Journalism and Mass Communications, University of South Carolina, 1991. *Abstract:* Mutual perceptions of public affairs officers for the IRS and newspaper reporters who cover the IRS were explored through use of a Q sample of 50 items. The sample was composed of statements centering on attitudes and beliefs of one group toward the other, perceptions of occupational status and perceptions of news values. Each subject provided two Q sorts -- one to represent his or her own self-role, and another as the person's counterpart (i.e., IRS representative or reporter) would be expected to sort. Chaffee and McLeod's coorientation model was used to compare cross perceptions in the factors. Two factors emerged from the analysis. Factor I, composed of all the public affairs officers and 46% of the reporters, is characterized as Concerned Partners and is defined by items of mutual concern -- integrity, working together and facilitating the news dissemination process. Factor II, termed Dutiful Skeptics, is a profile defined primarily by items reflecting skepticism of government, an altruistic commitment to reporting the news and, in general, serving as watchdogs of the public interest. The investigation found no demographic pattern for deviant cases.

### **SPSA Q Methodology Panel**

J. David Gillespie (Presbyterian College, Clinton, SC 29325) organized and chaired a panel on *Q Methodology in Political Research: The Post Stephenson Era*, at the 63rd annual meeting of the Southern Political Science Association, Tampa, 7-9 November 1991. Steven R. Brown (Kent State U) served as discussant for the following two papers:

Charles Cottle (U Wisconsin-Whitewater), *Current Directions in Q Methodology*. In recent years, Q methodology has enjoyed considerable success in gaining acceptance among a variety of social science disciplines. This paper reviews several recent discussions of Q methodology with an eye toward identifying trends in its use. Three types of methodological discussions are reviewed. These include those reports on Q that emphasize technique; those that emphasize broader methodological issues such as epistemology, ontology, and ethics; and those reports that focus on the illustrative uses of Q methodology in various disciplines. The review indicates there are several interpretations concerning the nature and use of Q methodology.

Dan Thomas (Wartburg Coll) and Larry Baas (Valparaiso U), *The Issue of Generalization in Q Methodology: "Reliable Schematics" Revisited*. Research employing Q technique and its attendant methodology has long encountered criticism targeted on the allegedly specious, "non-generalizable" nature of such findings. Drawn typically from small-sample investigations of human subjectivity, wherein respondents supply data through Q sorts composed of items of unknown reliability, findings from Q studies are considered by many to fall far short of the minimal criteria for scientific measurement. Issues of generalization in Q methodology, it is argued, are amenable to examination in terms of the notion of "reliable schematics." Findings from two pairs of "tandem-study" explorations substantiate claims that skepticism over reliability issues stemming from the use of Q is exaggerated, if not unfounded. A concluding discussion draws attention to possibilities for further consideration of these questions.

This is the second Q panel which has been hosted by the Southern Political Science Association (see *OS* April 1983), and three other Q studies were presented on other panels: Subash M. Shah (Winston-Salem State U), *Attitudes Toward U.S. Policy in South*



*Africa*, Sharon A. Sykora (Slippery Rock U), *Political Cultural Characterizations of Second-Wave Vietnamese Refugees*, and David E. England (Arkansas State U) and F. David Levenbach, *Cognitive Structures in Citizen Appraisals of Municipal Services*.

## **Research in Progress:**

### **Clarence Thomas vs. Anita Hill**

*Deconstructing the Political Spectacle: Sex, Race, and Subjectivity in Public Response to the Clarence Thomas/Anita Hill "Sexual Harrassment" Hearings\**

*Project Directors:* Dan Thomas and Craig McCoy, Department of Social Sciences, Wartburg College, Waverly, IA 50677; and Alan McBride, Department of Political Science, Grambling State University, Grambling, LA 71245.

Extending Murray Edelman's analysis of the constructed, phenomenal nature of political spectacles, this research employs Q methodology as a means of interrogating the range of meanings implicit in public reaction to televised hearings held by the U.S. Senate in connection with Anita Hill's charges of sexual harassment against Supreme Court nominee Clarence Thomas. Results based on n=50 subjects (26 black, 24 white, with approximately equal numbers of men and women within the two races) disclose a range of five alternative constructions of the same set of events, which closely follow racial and gender lines.

*Factor A* contains mainly females, both black and white ("Anita Hill was telling the truth; however, the way she was brought into the limelight to testify against Thomas was wrong"). *Factor B* reflects a concentration of black females who defended Thomas ("Anita Hill's coming to testify against Judge Thomas after ten years of silence shows me how vindictive she was to try

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\*The manuscript from this study has now been accepted for publication in the *American Journal of Political Science*.