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NEWS, NOTES & COMMENT

The Koffka Connection

In his "The Communicability and Operantcy of Self" (*OS*, October 1979), William Stephenson remarks that "the nearest to our position about self is Kurt Koffka's," whom Stephenson had met during his physics days at Durham and later during Koffka's year at Oxford, and it is illuminating in this regard to read Koffka's remarks about their encounter in the latter's life-long correspondence with Molly Harrower in her recently published *Kurt Koffka: An Unwitting Self-Portrait* (Gainesville: University Presses of Florida, 1983). Harrower (1906-) was an early champion of the then new Rorschach technique, and is currently professor emeritus in the Department of Clinical Psychology at the University of Florida, and her correspondence with Koffka (1886-1941) spans the years 1928-1941.

The sprinkled references to Stephenson all appear in the final chapter, "In Oxford: The Year Unfolds." The first occurs in the context of the 1939 meeting of the British Association of Sciences in Dundee where Koffka writes Harrower (from Oxford on September 7) that he "heard a rather uninteresting paper by Philip Vernon on prediction of psychological aptitude and a somewhat more interesting paper by Stephenson on physical activity, sports, etc., which was read by Rex

Knight" (p. 208). Koffka relates that on the previous evening he attended a reception during which he conversed with new friends and even danced with Mrs. R.C. Oldfield: "But it was a rather dull time, discussions on pacifism and factor analysis don't go with tails, and sounding brass bands" (p. 207).

Later, in a letter from Oxford dated December 3, Koffka wrote that "when I saw Cairns [Sir Hugh William Bell Cairns, British neurosurgeon] to show him your 'figures' he asked me about my dinner with Stephenson at Corpus. This gave me the chance of telling him that S. had asked me whether I should not like to become attached to Corpus. I had replied I should like to very much indeed, but that I felt under some sort of obligation to Balliol. When I told Cairns he was delighted. He said that Corpus was an excellent college, its president Sir Richard Livingstone the best type of Englishman, the finest product of Oxford, and that I could not do better. Corpus, incidentally, was the college of [William] MacDougall and [Ferdinand] Schiller. So I wrote Stephenson a note and got a very enthusiastic reply" (pp. 230-231).

Finally, Koffka reports (April 8, 1940, from Oxford) on a meeting of the British Psychological Society in Birmingham at which he was elected honorary member. Among those in attendance, in addition to Stephenson, were Charles Spearman, Maria Jahoda, J.C. Flugel, and Manchester University psychologist Thomas Pear, with whom Stephenson apparently became involved in an aggressive argument (p. 244). No details are given.

Harrower is very helpful in revealing the identity of the persons to whom Koffka refers: When he mentions Spearman, for example, she inserts in brackets "C.E. Spearman, professor of psychology, University of London," and she appends a glossary of names and biographical sketches of the dramatis personae in Koffka's correspondence. Stephenson is not included in the glossary, however, nor is he ever referred to other than as "Stephenson," i.e., Harrower does not provide his first name, although she does note in brackets that he was an Oxford psychologist. The impression grows, therefore, that Harrower's memory

failed on this matter--an ironic failure inasmuch as she was the general editor of the series which published Jack Block's *The Q-Sort Method in Personality Assessment and Psychiatric Research* (Springfield IL: Charles C Thomas, 1961; republished: Palo Alto CA, Consulting Psychologists Press, 1978).

Forthcoming Articles and Papers

William Stephenson, "Methodology for 'Statements of Problems': Kantor and Spearman Conjoined," *Psychological Record*. *Abstract*: Modern objective science deals with "statements of facts"; subjective science deals, instead, with "statements of problems." The latter are widely held to be insoluble; the practice is to transform them into soluble problems by acts of judgment--the art of policy-making. The question arises, Can policy-making be made more science than art?, which is the problem of problems, in the subjective domain, mainly in formation of significant concepts. Q methodology provides an affirmative answer to this problem. An example is provided, for Freeman Dyson's views on the problem of nuclear war, in which humanistic subjectivity (hope) is distinguished from objective inhumanism (weapons). The study shows that concepts of moral feeling-states are at the root of Dyson's humanism. The method requires acceptance of "self-reference" as central to subjective science. It happens that Kantor and Spearman are congruent with respect to the state of psychology "down the ages," but their formulations remain in the Newtonian mode of objectivity. The formulations of Q (in relativity, quantum theoretical and interbehavioral terms) add to this a basis for subjective science, and provide answers to the problem of "consciousness" and "mind." An appeal is made for a few interbehaviorists to advance into the Einsteinian age of relativity, quantum theory and interbehaviorism.

William Stephenson, "Perspectives in Psychology: Integration in Clinical Psychology," *Psychological Record*. The operant factors of Q methodology are recommended as the "vital signs" for clinical psychology in the same sense that temperature, blood pressure, and pulse rate provide vital signs in the medical field.

Factors reveal infrastructure, unpredictable on quantum grounds, and alert the therapist to potentially treatable conditions meriting further attention, without recourse to the ad hoc categorizations of psychoanalysis, Rorschach diagnostics, and the rest which lack the laws and universal scheme of measurement for every psychological event. Freud's case of Dora is used to demonstrate how *overt* feelings are projected onto a concourse during Q sorting and are transformed into factor structure, revealing *covert* self reference and providing the foundation upon which to determine the nature of the problems in Dora's particular dysfunction, all from the subjective standpoint.

Barbara Poole (Political Science, Kent State U) and Gertrude Steuernagel, "A Subjective Examination of Theories of Justice," to be presented at a panel on Liberal Philosophy and Politics, Southern Political Science Association, Savannah GA, November 1-3, 1984. *Proposal summary:* John Rawls and Robert Nozick place questions of equality and liberty in a central place in their thoughts on justice, but it may well be that people not trained in their particular philosophical tradition might conceive of questions relating to justice in an entirely different manner. Preliminary findings suggest that at least some people look at justice in a fashion not addressed in the major theoretical literature. The research involves Q methodology in an attempt to uncover how people not trained as professional political philosophers think about justice. $N = 40$ statements have been collected from Rawls' *A Theory of Justice*, Nozick's *Anarchy, State, and Utopia*, and selected articles concerning Rawls and Nozick. The subjects rank ordered these statements under two conditions of instruction--the first in terms of how they themselves feel at this time, and the second in terms of Rawls' original position behind the "veil of ignorance." The findings are particularly useful in addressing some of the points Rawls raises in his Dewey lectures.

Dan B. Thomas (Wartburg College), Lee Sigelman, and Larry R. Baas, "Public Evaluations of the President: Policy, Partisan, and 'Personal' Determinants," *Political Psychology*, 1984(Dec), 5(4). *Abstract:* The

relative and cumulative impacts of policy- and personal-proximity, along with partisanship, upon evaluations of presidential performance are tested through analysis of data on three samples of college students. "Presidential identification," a concept neglected in the mainstream political science literature, emerges alongside policy proximity and partisanship as a strong predictor of assessments of President Reagan's performance in office. Concluding discussion centers on the implications of this finding for our understanding of the specific linkage between the President and the public and for our more general understanding of the dynamics of political behavior. (Determination of the degree of identification of the President with each person's self-ideal is made through the application of Q technique.)

Recent Publications and Presentations

Carolyn F. Waltz (School of Nursing, U Maryland), Ora L. Strickland, and Elizabeth R. Lenz, *Measurement in Nursing Research*. Philadelphia: F.A. Davis Co., 1984. A 9-page section on "Q-Sort" (pp. 297-305) is included in a chapter on "Strategies and Techniques for Designing Nursing Tools and Procedures." Q is referred to as "a norm-referenced technique for the measurement of affect that is usually employed in order to (1) assess the degree of similarity between different subjects' or different groups of subjects' attitudes, expectations, or perceptions at a given point in time; or (2) determine the change in subjects or groups of subjects' attitudes or perceptions over time" (p. 297)--hence technique rather than broader methodological concerns is at issue. This is also apparent in the procedural recommendation (at p. 297) that "summary statistics (e.g., mode, median, and mean rank, interquartile range)" be determined for each item across all subjects, and in the view that "reliability and validity...are endangered if directions are not clearly specified in a manner that is readily understood and followed by the subjects" (p. 301). Cross-subject summaries of course obviate the principle of operancy, and whereas clarity in presentation is to be encouraged, it is more to help

the Q sorter to focus on the task than to guarantee enhancement of reliability or validity as usually conceived. Otherwise, this chapter fragment provides a concise and competent summary of technical considerations which is bound to be helpful in introducing Q to the rapidly growing number of nursing researchers, and the appended 33-item bibliography (pp. 309-310) contains several new citations which will be added to the "Q Bibliographic Update."

Deborah K. Sell (Honors College, Kent State U) and Steven R. Brown, "Q Methodology as a Bridge Between Qualitative and Quantitative Research: Application to the Analysis of Attitude Change in Foreign Study Program Participants," in JoAnne L. Vacca and Harold A. Johnson (Eds.), *Qualitative Research in Education* (Graduate School of Education Monograph Series). Kent OH: College of Education, Kent State University, 1984, pp. 79-87. Q methodology is offered as an "approach to the analysis of subjectivity through objective techniques," and its utility is illustrated in summaries of three studies--by Taba (1953), McKeown and Craig (1978), and Sell (1980)--of the changing attitudes and perceptions of student participants in study-abroad programs. Copies of the 87-page monograph, which contains eight other chapters preceded by an introduction by John O. Crites, can be obtained for \$3.50 each (payable to KSU Foundation) c/o Qualitative Monograph, Bureau of Research and Training Services, 505 White Hall, College of Education, Kent State University, Kent OH 44242.

Steven R. Brown (Political Science, Kent State U) and Carolyn L. Brown, "Power, Affection, and Skill: The Value Context of Unauthorized Violence in the Family," Third Policy Sciences Summer Institute, University of Chicago, June 20-22, 1984. Focusing on the general problem of domestic violence, this presentation included a Q-methodological evaluation of a training program for volunteers in a shelter for battered women. A Q sample composed of counseling skills (e.g., "Keeps her own feelings under control and accepts differences in others," "Supportive," and "Can be very persuasive, even forceful if necessary") was administered to 11 trainees before and after a

20-hour training program, and their Q sorts, along with one representing a composite of the training staff's conception of "the ideal volunteer," were factor analyzed, the resulting four factors indicating initial standpoints and the extent and direction of change in individual cases.

Robert L. Savage (Political Science, U Arkansas), Dan Nimmo, and Michael W. Mansfield, "Reconstruction of Political Images: Empirical Types and Hypothesized Traits," International Communication Association, San Francisco, May 1984. The authors variance analyze the factor scores emanating from a Q-technique study of self concept, the image of the ideal President, and images of four 1972 presidential candidates (Humphrey, Kennedy, McGovern, and Muskie), thereby testing the relative influence of role orientation versus traits (as structured into the Q sample) for each of 29 emerging factors. Among the implications discussed are those for political consultants whose job it is to advise candidates in an era of mass communication and declining partisanship.

Erratum

In the April issue of *OS* (pp. 98-99), Greg Casey's article on "Intensive Analysis of a 'Single' Issue: Attitudes on Abortion" was erroneously listed as forthcoming in *Micropolitics*. It is scheduled instead to appear in the fall issue of *Political Methodology*.

Institutionalized Distortions

From P. McC. Miller and M.J. Wilson, *A Dictionary of Social Science Methods*, New York, John Wiley, 1983:

Q-mode A Q-mode factor analysis aims to see if individual *people* have similarities in their profiles on a set of variables. This is to be contrasted with *R-mode* which assesses whether *scores* on different variables group together.

Q-technique An approach focusing on whether individuals agree with each other across a series of tests, or alternatively whether the same individual gets the same pattern of scores at different times or under different conditions. A Q-type

factor analysis investigates whether there are types of *people* by seeing if different people's profiles of scores on a series of tests go together in recognizable patterns. This may be contrasted with *R*-type factor analysis where correlations between test scores are the focus of interest.

And from David J. Stang and Lawrence S. Wrightsman, *Dictionary of Social Behavior and Social Research Methods*, Monterey CA, Brooks/Cole, 1981:

Factor analysis A set of statistical procedures used to summarize the interrelationships within a large set of variables. Factor analyses may be performed on the intercorrelations of a number of variables across individuals (*R*-type factor analysis), of a number of people across variables (*Q*-type, or *inverse factor analysis*, or *transpose factor analysis*), or of a number of variables repeatedly measured in the same person (*P*-type, or *P-technique*).

Q Sort A personality inventory in which an individual sorts a number of statements into piles on the basis of the extent to which each statement applies to him or her.

Et Cetera

Friendly words are rendered by Robert R. Monaghan (Communication, Ohio State U) in his "Pre-emptive Language," *ETC: A Review of General Semantics*, 1983, 40, 437-440: "It is axiomatic in communication research that our expressions, including our choice of words, correspond to what William Stephenson calls our 'attitude of mind.' Most thoughtful theorists would agree that (A) expressed language directly or indirectly corresponds to internal meanings, and (B) that attitude of mind determines the choice of the words we use" (p. 437). In a footnote, Monaghan notes that Stephenson's "theoretical and research insights" are located in *The Study of Behavior*, *The Play Theory of Mass Communication*, and "in a journal called *Operant Subjectivity*."