

## THE KENT STATE UNIVERSITY LECTURES (CONT'D)

On May 7-8, 1980, William Stephenson lectured before the Departments of Political Science, Psychology, and Philosophy at Kent State University, and addressed the initiation banquet of the Kent State chapter of Pi Sigma Alpha, the national political science honorary. He also appeared before an open forum on Q technique and its methodology. A summary of his first lecture, "Political Science: Myth and Method," appeared in the July issue.

*(2) Reflections on Sir Cyril Burt*

Stephenson concluded his address before the Psychology Department by saying that he "would like to save Burt from too much harm...[although] I'm quite sure I suffered more than any of you have suffered" from Burt's influence, which was among the most important impediments to the acceptance of Stephenson's ideas in Britain. Burt was a good lecturer, according to Stephenson, and a prodigious worker; at the same time he was lonely, aloof, and in the grip of a delusional idea system. But his contributions to factor theory have been underrated. Although Spearman invented factor analysis, his computations were based on the tedium of vanishing tetrads and tetrad differences; Burt was therefore the first to give us factor analysis (simple summation) in the modern sense. And at the more important metaphysical level, "...he knew, as I knew, that factor theory is the same thing exactly as quantum theory in physics--the same equations, the same matrix algebra, the same purpose," and that what exists at the subatomic level (e.g., the number of quarks) is as indeterminate as the number of factors: "They can only be induced; they're not things you can deduce beforehand" (cf. Burt, 1940: 92f; Stephenson, in press).

Moreover, "Burt has been blamed for things that he was not really responsible for," e.g., the eventual directions of the 1944 (Butler) Act which he supported because he favored the idea of a universal

secondary education for everyone. Ultimately, however, Parliament funneled the money to the near-bankrupt private schools, such as Eaton and Winchester, thereby fostering the hierarchies which Burt's findings could perhaps be seen to have lent support, but which he personally did not. (For further commentary on the Butler Act, see Stephenson, 1949.) Similarly in more recent times, the government of Margaret Thatcher vitiated the 1978 Labour Party initiatives to provide comprehensive schooling for all children. There are elements in the Establishment in England and elsewhere, Stephenson said, which believe that there are only a few worth educating.

"I'm not saying that I forgive Burt for cheating," Stephenson said, "but we must also remember that he was a genius, a very kindly person, and that he had a heart: He couldn't possibly have dealt with defective children and delinquents in the way that he did without being a man of great compassion."

(3) *Shah Pahlavi: Orghast  
and Political Communication*<sup>1</sup>

Orghast was the new language, invented by Ted Hughes, which was used in the play of the same name performed at Persepolis and Shiraz in 1971 in celebration by the Shah of the 2500 years of the Persian Empire. This new language was to have universal meaning, through feeling more than intellect, and consisted of "sounds, gestures and words never seen or heard before, with chanting, wailing, moaning, exhalting, pitying, fearing, supplication and the like much in evidence, distilled from the myths, magic, sounds and symbols of Ancient Greek, Roman, Semitic and Oriental cultures." Stephenson judged the linguistic effort a failure, but it naturally engaged his long interest in primitive communication as found, for example, in political myths and play.<sup>2</sup>

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1. Based on "Reflections: Shah Pahlavi, Orghast, and Prometheus," unpublished paper, c1972.

2. The primitive nature of play is asserted as

The problem is one of side-stepping inhibitors to communication about matters of significance. If ten Soviet and American women were brought together, for example, they would probably glare with silent suspicion at one another; but if a baby were placed in their midst, there would be a confluence of talk about the baby which would undercut ideological differences. How, then, can we get people to communicate with one another about things that matter? In terms of current U.S.-Iranian relations, how can two intractable cultures become communicable?

That something happens is a *fact*, but in its reportage (as through the mass media) it becomes a story about the fact, a *factuality*, in which projected emotions are inflated and reality loses out--"hostages become heroic, their captors tyrannical; or the reverse for Iranians, for whom the hostages are spies and the militant students heroic." Such imagery also surrounded Pope John XXIII (humility) and President Kennedy (youthfulness) whose deaths triggered communication worldwide, superseding ideologies, class distinctions, age differentials, and other less primitive obstructions to communicability.

Even in the West, political participation is restricted--women cannot as yet vote in Switzerland, for example, and the U.S. has not passed the Equal Rights Amendment; hence, politics is somewhat new, and all new institutions are playful. What political leaders need, therefore, are *communication games*--equivalent to the war games of the world's armies--which deal not with propaganda, but with actual courses of action set as upon a stage, so that metaphor and reality can meet headon.<sup>3</sup> "Political science, for me, is

the opening line of Huizinga's (1955: 1) *Homo Ludens*: "Play is older than culture, for culture...always presupposes human society, and animals have not waited for man to teach them their playing."

3. Stephenson provided an example with a "dream" of his own, a play to last seven days: The Shah and Khomeini are brought together in front of the tomb of King Artaxerxes III, near the ruins of Persepolis, atop the Mountain of Mercy above Shiraz. There is a

a very important thing, indeed," Stephenson concluded, "provided you keep the fun in it...."

(4) *Open Forum: Q-Technique and Its Methodology*

The British psychologist J.C. Flugel is reported to have remarked at some point that in June 1935, Charles Stephenson was born and so was Q methodology, for during the time in which Mrs. Stephenson was being creative, William Stephenson was being creative as well: "I suddenly realized that if you reverse all the equations, you have Q." The results were Charles Spearman's namesake and the famous June 28 letter to the editor of *Nature* (reproduced on the inside front cover of *Operant Subjectivity*, April 1978).

After this introduction, Stephenson reminisced about his life and the "life chances" that helped fashion his career--of his mining engineer grandfather who interested him in science, of his Oxford trained elementary teachers who prepared him for both the sciences and the humanities, of his solid physics training which led to an offer of appointment to work with Enrico Fermi, and of the hotbeds of intellectual excitement into which it was his good fortune to be placed and which enabled him to influence and be influenced by leading intellects of the time--Charles Spearman, Maxwell Garnett, C.S. Lewis, Carl Jung, Kurt Koffka, Gilbert Ryle, G.E. Moore, Susan Isaacs, and Ernest Jones who nominated him for his two year psychoanalysis with Melanie Klein; in America, especially during the Chicago days, he was in touch with Carl Rogers, Thomas Szasz, David Riesman, Edward Shils, Edgar Friedenberg, and F.A. Hayek.

guard composed of 10,000 U.S. Marines; witnesses include diplomats from the U.S. government; there are six judges from the International Court. The Khomeinians have two days to issue their complaints; the Americans get two days; and the Shah two. The judges deliberate and announce their decision on the final day. All is broadcast worldwide, after which the Shah is free to return to exile. From such confrontation, a new Camp David theme might evolve.

Among his most prominent life chances were (1) World War II, during which he was a Brigadier in charge of ground personnel selection for the Army and Air Force (making him more experienced in ability testing than most R methodologists), and after which he was charged with writing the directives for the Indian Army;<sup>4</sup> (2) his decision to move to the United States, motivated in part by a recognition that he would unlikely win a suitable post and that his innovative ideas would be smothered under the influence of Cyril Burt, as they very nearly were by L.L. Thurstone at Chicago; (3) his inability, from 1949-51, to find housing for his family, which remained in Vancouver, thereby liberating him to write;<sup>5</sup> (4) similarly, his inability to find housing in Bethesda, following his departure from Chicago, leading to his acceptance of a position with Nowland, a New York advertising agency, and his subsequent move to the University of Missouri.

Part of his success Stephenson also attributes to his quasi-philosophy of "going in the opposite direction." His elementary teacher remembered him as the child who sat on his desk rather than in the chair; and whereas Spearman regarded psychoanalysis as Public Enemy No. 2 (behaviorism was No. 1), Stephenson was bound to take Jung and Klein seriously; but while the psychoanalysts were talking ego, he

4. It was during this war period that Stephenson introduced the PPP program (Philosophy, Psychology, and Physiology) to Oxford, which involved a debate between he and philosopher Gilbert Ryle prior to a vote in Stephenson's favor by the University community.

5. Absent the pitter-patter of little feet, three book-length manuscripts were produced: *The Study of Behavior*, *Psychoanalysis and Q-Method*, and *Intimations of Self Psychology*, only the first of which has been published. Commenting on life circumstances, Stephenson noted that "In England there are no counselors of the kind you have here in the United States: you had to stick it out, so that much of my work was an effort to get rid of something."

was talking self, which analysts such as Kohut, Kernberg, and others are only now coming around to. Stephenson's most noted "opposite direction" is, of course, Q methodology itself,<sup>6</sup> and it was this general obduracy and tendency to strike out on one's own that supported his proclivity for founding things--the Non-Smokers Union, Oxford's PPP program, the Rorschach Forum, the Club for the Study of Aging (see *Operant Subjectivity*, January 1979), the student wing of the Labour Party, and the Institute of Marketing Research. He also admits that "I was very lucky."

Methodologically, Stephenson dwelled on chapter 2 of *The Study of Behavior* ("Dependency Factor Analysis," esp. pp. 45-46), which he regards as the most important in the book. He had not known of Peirce's work before coming to the U.S.--he was introduced to it by his Ph.D. student Lawrence Kohlberg, now of moral-development fame--but was already aware of three kinds of propositions (general, singular, and induced), which he illustrated using statements gathered from Susan Morgan's *In the Meantime: Character and Perception in Jane Austen's Fiction* (1980):

I give people a dressing down if they deserve it.  
 I like a person, or not, immediately.  
 A woman of 27 can never hope to marry.  
 I give people less than their due.  
 I believe my feelings are stronger than I have declared.

These are all *general* propositions, which can never be proved, and cannot be tested directly; what Stephenson learned from R.A. Fisher, however, was that general propositions can be designed much in the same way as Fisher was designing agricultural fields, as in the table on the next page, based on Jane Austen's *Sense and Sensibility*. Consequently, some of the

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6. This is eloquently captured in the statement printed opposite the title page of *The Study of Behavior*: "We must, to change the Greek epigram a little, ascend downward and descend upward, if we would reach truth, or any true persuasion of it."

A. Sense	(a) common	(b) uncommon
B. Sensibility	(c) pain	(d) pleasure

above propositions are a matter of (a) common sense, and some are (b) uncommon. Sensibility concerns how we react to others: (c) communication pain involves work, social constraints, self worth, character, and loss of self; (d) communication pleasure involves play and self enhancement. Hence, the proposition "A woman of 27 can never hope to marry" is of the (ac) kind; "I believe my feelings are stronger than I have declared" is (bd); etc. The placement of items is not a matter of debate, for no test is to be made of the items' general meanings. When a person is instructed to perform a Q sort with these statements, however--e.g., under the condition "What are you like now?" or "What does your mother think of you?"--a *singular* situation is at issue, i.e., the propositions become specific. The factors which emanate are *induced* propositions: they are inductions, they are new in the sense that they could not be deduced beforehand, and they are objective. And they may lead to assertions not contained in the original design.

#### (5) Newton's Fifth Rule

Stephenson began by drawing attention to Peirce's (1955) *law of mind* and to the "spreading out of ideas" common to Q sorting,<sup>7</sup> as well as to the in-

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7. Specifically, Peirce (1955) states that "Logical analysis applied to mental phenomena shows that there is but one law of mind, namely, that ideas tend to spread continuously and to affect certain others which stand to them in a peculiar relation of affectibility. In this spreading they lose intensity, and especially the power of affecting others, but gain generality and become welded

herent structure of common knowledge, even among young children. At 18 months, he said, his daughter had already categorized all cats--from house cats to the tigers and lynx at the zoo--as "puss-puss" and all dogs as "bow-wow," indicating the spread of ideas and concepts to new objects and the structuring of implicit meanings. Operant structures are revealed through the factor analysis of Q sorts, and these apply to the knowledge of children (Stephenson, 1980) no less than of medical scientists (Stephenson, 1978b). Operant factors are grounded in feeling primarily, rather than facts or reasoning, and are intrinsic to the person, i.e., are affected as little as possible by instrumentation.<sup>8</sup> As to meaning, it emerges from other meanings: Degas' paintings, for example, came after he had familiarized himself with a great many other paintings in Paris. Likewise with concourses in Q methodology: The individual is confronted with 50-60 disparate statements, each with meaning individually grasped, yet a complete and new meaning is made of them through Q sorting, as contiguous ideas flow together fused by feeling.

Stephenson then outlined Newton's four published "rules of reasoning," and asserted that the unpublished Fifth Rule reflected Newton's concern with the

with other ideas" (p. 340). Elsewhere (Peirce, 1958: 7.467), he says "the law of mind is that feelings and ideas attach themselves in thought so as to form systems."

8. Stephenson said he learned the principle of operantcy from Charles Spearman (Stephenson, 1977), well in advance of Skinner. The idea that "the instrument should not matter" accounts in part for why there are no standard Q sorts: Just as a Skinner box provides an arena for a pigeon's pecking of a key (no matter how large the box, its material composition, the color of the key, etc.), so will implicit meanings emerge as Q sorts despite the number of statements, their content, the range and shape of the distribution, etc., so long as minimal standards are met (e.g., that the statements are comprehensive and are rank-ordered).



origin of hypotheses which are believed but which can be neither proved nor disproved. (For example, Newton believed his own theory of gravity but couldn't prove it, and did not believe Leibniz' and Descartes' but couldn't disprove them.) Yet statements capable of neither proof nor disproof, when placed in a Q sample, give rise to *induced propositions* (factors) which represent *new* hypotheses to be explained,<sup>9</sup> and undercurrents of inherent meaning. Examples were then given of Newton's Fifth Rule as it has been applied to theories of the universe (Stephenson, 1979), to psychological theories of health care (Stephenson, 1978a), to Polanyi's philosophy (Stephenson, in press), and to the problem of death (Nesterenko, 1980).

Modern objective science (e.g., physics) is without self reference, Stephenson concluded, and once subjective science gets to its laws and truths, it too will be without self reference. Newton's four published rules apply to both of these endeavors, yet subjective science always involves the self, i.e., it is the self that does the actual Q sorts, and this alone implicates Newton's Fifth Rule. Consequently, "Newton's Fifth Rule for me is an astonishing way in which everything that people have talked about in terms of induction, the arrival of new hypotheses--it's all now explicated."

### References

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9. Hence the fundamental difference between discoveries (abduction) and statistical regularities (inductive enumeration): The former searches for *new* things, whereas the latter merely records the repetition of the old. This distinction likewise justifies the view (noted in the previous footnote) that Q samples ought not be standardized, i.e., one is not usually interested in the repeated measurement of known entities, but in the discovery of new meanings which exist independently of devices designed to measure them.

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Due to space limitations in this issue, Charles Cottle's summary of the Eastern Communication Association panel on play theory will appear in the January 1981 issue.