THE KENT STATE UNIVERSITY LECTURES

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. Summaries of these lectures begin with the following.

(1) Political Science: Myth and Method

Stephenson began by outlining his own interests in politics, beginning with the time he helped found the student wing of the Labour Party, back when Labour was still in the minority. This activity brought him into contact with several members of Parliament who nicknamed him "Red Stivvy" due to his red hair and ruddy complexion. (Later, while working in the Pentagon in the selection of personnel for what was to become the astronaut program, his nickname and non-American citizenship led to a transfer out from this security-sensitive position.) At the University of Missouri, his book manuscript on *The Amelioration of Political Conflict* (ca. 1959) was judged unacceptable for methodological reasons; several chapters later found their way into his volume on play theory.

Taking issue with the view that "a science of things (physics) is possible, whereas a science of persons is not" (as advanced by W.G. Runciman, *Social Science and Political Theory*), Stephenson summarized a typical Q study based on an evaluation of the Iranian hostage problem reported in *The New Yorker* (April 28, May 5, 1980). Q sorts--all performed by himself and representing theoretical vantagepoints as well as the views of various participants in the situation--produced two factors: *Factor I*, which was defined by his own personal view and those of Max

Weber (rational-legal) and the West European allies (Helmut Schmidt, Margaret Thatcher), counsels patience and warns of the dangers of impatience. *Factor II* was defined by Khomeini, the Marxists, and by the American antiwar groups. (Bipolar on II was the Lazarsfeldian view, and that of the U.S. oligarchy.) This factor emphasized American self absorption, hence was congruent with the cultural criticism advanced by Christopher Lasch.

Stephenson emphasized the reality (i.e., operant nature) of the above factors, and the extent to which we are all subject to structures. This was given added emphasis in the study of a 4 year old girl who Q sorted a sample of children's faces according to seven conditions of instruction, eventuating in the three factors shown here (and reported in more detail in "Consciring," *Communication Yearbook 4*, 1980)--the first being "me", the latter two "mine" only (William James), indicating an idealization of the current self (*f*) and a detachment from the mother (*g*), but with an expectation of growth in yet a different direction (no. 6, on *h*).

Instructions	*f*	*g*	*h*
1. me	X	.	.
2. according to Mummy	.	X	.
3. " " brother	.	.	X
4. " " teacher	.	X	.
5. " " pet dog	X	.	.
6. me more grown up	.	.	X
7. the very best girl	X	.	.

X = significant loadings

Science depends on measurement, and on *what* is measured. An objective science, such as physics, eliminates self; a subjective science, such as political science, has self in it. Stephenson argued with Cyril Burt over what was to be measured; nevertheless, they both realized factor theory to be the same as quantum theory (cf. Burt, *The Factors of the Mind*, pp. 92ff) inasmuch as predictability is impossible in both (Heisenberg). As Stephenson expressed it: "You get a few little electrons and bang them with enormous force on the accelerator to a poor little atom. It splits up into what? Two quarks?

Or three quarks? You can't predict. What you get in physics is unpredictable, except in terms of probability, or only in terms of factors like these. Those factors for that little child [*supra*] are only me bombarding her with Q sorts, and out of it come these factors. It's the same mathematics, the same probability."

For Burt, measurement was to be in terms of individual differences (R methodology), but the problem was that no one knew the meaning of the arithmetic mean--hence the battles involving Jensen and others about whether white people really have higher mean IQs than black people, etc. There is no point of origin in R. With Q there is, the same for everyone in every culture. Stephenson then went on to discuss this principle with illustrations drawn from psychophysical studies on olfaction.

There exist implicit meanings and structures (Polanyi). People are generally unaware of them, but they are there and we can now get to them. With respect to political myths, induced structures (factors) tell us what our interpretations should be about, and indicate that the structures we describe are objective and not just a matter of opinion.

Stephenson concluded on an affirmative note: "There *is* a science for society."

Reported by Steven R. Brown

In the next issue...

Continued summary of "The Kent State University Lectures," plus a report by Charles Cottle on the ECA panel on play theory (see p. 138), and Alexander Nesterenko's description of a comprehensive new computer program designed exclusively for the analysis of Q technique data. Also appearing will be Stephenson's "Applications of Communication Theory: V. Play-Theoretical Aspects of Science."
