FOREWORD

Aspiring journalists are generally long on words and short on numbers. One can therefore imagine the befuddlement which existed in William Stephenson's seminars on communication theory as students who were accustomed to covering a beat were suddenly confronted with a dizzying array of factor loadings, correlation coefficients, and factor scores. Confusion was abated somewhat by obtaining a copy of a dittoed handout labeled "Factor Analysis" (reproduced in the following pages) which, to Stephenson's best recollection, was originally drafted for his Oxford students and later revised for use at Chicago and Missouri. It was a valuable piece of property that was jealously guarded, and although it now sounds somewhat prehistoric--with mention of calculations by slide rule and the use of Barlow's tables--it is still a good summary of essentials and is of practical utility in small studies and for classroom demonstrations. For a small-scale investigation involving fewer than a dozen Q sorts (obtained, say, from the same person under different conditions of instruction), the factors can be obtained more quickly by hand, following the rules below, than by computer when time is allowed for data punching and turn-around time. Modern pocket calculators convert into streamlined procedure virtually all of what before was drudgery.

Also appearing in this issue is a paper by Charles Cottle and Bruce McKeown on "The Forced-Free Distinction in Q Technique," which addresses the presumed distortion resulting when fixed numbers of statements are required to be placed beneath each point along the Q-sort continuum. Few pseudo-issues have generated as mountainous a literature as has the forced-free matter, but the authors clearly show its molehill reality by demonstrating the virtually nonexistent impact of distribution shape on factor structure.