FOREWORD

Of more than mere historical interest are two papers by William Stephenson, presented in 1949 and 1950 during a transitional period in which he was still affiliated with Oxford University and listed as Visiting Professor of Psychology, University of Chicago. They are reprinted here on account of their general unavailability in most libraries.

(i) The first, "Influence of cultural background on test performance,"* was presented October 29, 1949, at a conference sponsored by the Educational Testing Service, Princeton, and held at the Roosevelt Hotel in New York City. According to the conference chairman, Oscar K. Buros, "This conference was attended by more than two hundred educators, psychologists, and personnel workers interested in measurement and evaluation techniques.... Speakers were selected so as to represent a variety of viewpoints. We were especially fortunate that two distinguished British psychologists, H.J. Eysenck and William Stephenson, were in this country at the time of the conference and agreed to present papers." Stephenson's panel carried the above title, and included papers by Anne Anastasi (Fordham), Ernest A. Haggard (Chicago), and William W. Turnbull (ETS); other panelists were Buros, Harold Gulliksen, Hugh M. Davidson and Douglas E. Scates. Two other panels focused on "Uses and limitations of factor analysis in psychological research" (for which Stephenson served as discussant), and "Information which should be provided by test publishers and testing agencies on the validity and use of their tests."

Stephenson's broad cultural and historical interests are in evidence, as is his interest in the typologies of Spranger, Jung, and Fromm. The other participants' interests, however, seemed more narrow-

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*From *Proceedings ETS 1949 Invitational Conference on Testing Problems*, pp. 23-28.

ly psychometric. At one point in the subsequent discussion, Stephenson acknowledged his admiration for the elegance of testing mechanics and their importance "for practical purposes," and even related some of his own experiences in testing the British Army and Air Force. But, he went on to say, "I still have my problem that there are some very big issues, like the one of the Greek culture and the Golden Era; they are a phenomenon that has happened, and it would be so nice if we could find something that would alter things now so that we might have another sort of era; that would seem like a completely fantastic dream, though, I know." The disinclination on the part of the participants to dream, or at least to think abstractly, is witnessed by lack of subsequent discussion on any of the issues Stephenson raised.

(ii) The second paper, "Old age research in England," appeared in mimeographed form as part of the bound proceedings of a conference, *Research in Aging*, held at Berkeley on Aug. 7-10, 1950. Participants included Gregory Bateson, Else Frenkel-Brunswik, Ernest A. Haggard, Robert J. Havighurst, Clark Kerr, Seymour M. Lipset, and Heinz Werner.

The paper reveals another of Stephenson's little-known side interests, and the "Club for the Study of Aging" which he helped found is remarkably similar in its essentials to the "decision seminar" as it has evolved in the policy sciences. (See G.D. Brewer, "Dealing with complex social problems: The potential of the 'decision seminar'," in G.D. Brewer & R.D. Brunner, eds., *Political development and change*, New York, Free Press, 1975, pp. 439-461.) However, the discussion section demonstrates that participants were less interested in Stephenson's old age research than in his new Q-technique procedure. In a recent letter, Stephenson says of his discussion comments that "The example of scaling 0-10 was clearly in the context of statements all of *positive* saliency; I was more concerned to propose use of variance analyses and factor methods to 'single cases'--long before it was common practice to use variance analysis." It is also of historical interest to note that what was ul-

timately published as *The study of behavior* was apparently originally titled *Q-technique: The correlation of persons* and reviewed by Wiley.

Anyone who has ever been drawn into a consulting position and has elected to employ Q technique has invariably been confronted with the polling and survey bias which is now ingrained in the fabric of government and business decision-making. Knowledge is only secure, it is widely thought, when wrapped in large numbers. In their comparison of mailed and personally-administered Q sorts, Van Tubergen and Olins provide guidance for the large-scale application and evaluation of Q sorts, along with yet additional evidence indicating the needless requirement of many cases. When concern is with differences among types or audience segments, as it so often is, Keynes' principle of limited independent variety asserts itself rather quickly, and lends an air of redundancy to further accumulations of examples. Just as it is possible to distinguish a ruby-throated hummingbird from a kiwi without recourse to hundreds of each, so is it possible to distinguish one factor from another based on just a few observations. Van Tubergen and Olins speak directly to this point.

I can only extend my sympathy to the psychologist of the future, for it seems as if he must first be a mathematician, then a statistician, then a physiologist, then a physicist, and, if he is not dead of old age by then, a psychologist. (J.W. Dunlap)