

NEWS, NOTES & COMMENT

Readers will be interested in a recent paper by William Stephenson--"Q-methodology: Conceptualization and measurement of operant effects of television viewing," *JCATS: Journal of the Center for Advanced Television Studies* [London], 1976, 4(1), 17-18--in which he outlines the principles involved in studying the effects on children of viewing television violence. It is proposed that a child view a violent TV program and then be given a Q sample of 'stills' taken from the program with instructions to Q sort them according to a variety of conditions, e.g., Which frightened you most? Which did you enjoy most? Which do you suppose your mother would object to most? Which is most like you? etc. The resulting operant factors for each single case would serve to indicate the extent to which violence is internalized as a part of the self--as, for example, if those which *frighten me* and which *I enjoyed* were on the same factor with *most like me*. Other children will have experienced the film in a playful way, i.e., they may have enjoyed it as nonreal, as not self-involving except as an entertaining aside.

In another paper, "Q-methodology and the subjectivity of literature" (Buffalo Conference on Researching Response to Literature and the Teaching of Literature, State University of New York at Buffalo, October 27-29, 1977), Stephenson criticizes objective methodological approaches to the study of literature, including the pseudo-subjectivity of psychodynamic approaches. He suggests replacing them with the principles of concourses (Q universes) and the 'free creation' of thought (Einstein) which are intrinsic to Q. Illustrations are given from Eliot, O'Neill, and Pope, ultimately in reference to Newton's fifth rule. Following the conference, and with characteristic modesty, Stephenson remarked that "The conference went as I expected: Me understanding everyone else; no one understanding me!... I'm sure I was of nuisance value chiefly, and I enjoyed it." Plans are currently underway to include this paper, along with

other contributions from the conference, in a book tentatively scheduled for publication sometime in 1979.

Friendly words about Q and Stephenson's work are to be found in a recently-published book by Dan Nimmo, *Political communication and public opinion in America*, Santa Monica, CA: Goodyear, 1978.

Comments on the first two issues: I believe that it will perform an important service, and am really happy to see it appear.... Thanks for starting this fine publication.... It definitely fills a big need, and it is neatly produced to boot.... I was absolutely delighted to see Vol.1 No.1; this has been needed for a long time.... It is admirable, and I can only express my great pleasure about your venture; the type, layout, and cover are excellent.... I'm delighted to see Stephenson's work being advanced.... A bargain at any price.... Great idea; I'll look forward to future issues.... I certainly want to see the Q newsletter flourish and grow into a full-fledged journal.... I dearly hope that somehow *OS* becomes a springboard of sorts for Q so that someday I might write something about the creation of a new paradigm.... The title positions the publication brilliantly.

The most recent issue of *Interbehavioral Quarterly* (Vol.7, No.4), which seeks to promote the views of J.R. Kantor, notes the appearance of *Operant Subjectivity*, and further notes that Stephenson's work is in 'close kinship with interbehaviorism.' (The same issue of the *Quarterly* also contains a brief communique from Stephenson concerning his relationship to the late Sir Cyril Burt and the latter's role in educational theory and reform.) Stephenson's *The study of behavior* is generously sprinkled with references to Kantor, who was instrumental in establishing the *Psychological Record* in which many of Stephenson's papers have appeared since 1960. In many respects, the *Interbehavioral Quarterly*, ably edited since its inception by Noel W. Smith, provided the inspiration

for *Operant Subjectivity*. 'Underground' publications such as these are often more stimulating than the cost-effective but otherwise ineffectual periodicals that grace dusty library shelves (and which some sage once referred to as 'solar energy in captivity'). The *Quarterly* is undergoing editorial changes (including a new name, *The Interbehaviorist*) under the guidance of its new editor, Ronald G. Heyduk, Department of Psychology, Kenyon College, Gambier, OH 43022. Subscriptions are \$3 (students \$2, institutional \$4).

The following single-case studies, all employing Q technique, will be presented at a panel on Intensive Analysis in Political Research at the annual meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, April 20-22, in Chicago: Bruce F. McKeown (Seattle Pacific University), Displacement effects of hypnotically-induced mood states upon perception of public symbols; Dani B. Thomas (Wartburg College), Personality, perception, and political ideology: Psychodynamic aspects of political socialization and symbolism; and Larry R. Baas (Valparaiso University), The Constitution as symbol: The interpersonal sources of meaning of a secondary symbol.

Granted that all scientific description is based upon abstractions and generalizations, the latter must nevertheless be derived from observed events. Above all, the descriptions should not be confused with the phenomena described. (J.R. Kantor)