

FORWARD

In his paper on the methodology of single case studies (*Journal of Operational Psychiatry*, 1974), William Stephenson states that in correlation and factor work, "each Q-sort is in effect reduced to *standard scores* (as are all factors), whose mean is zero and standard deviation 1.00. This is a fundamental quantum measurement, for all subjectivity." The simple placement of statements in a Q sort enables a person to display his or her beliefs, convictions, and feelings about this or that topic, and to distinguish what matters most (+5, -5) from those things which are *unfelt* (score 0), i.e., which matter very little. It is this region of unfeeling, of lack of importance, that is presumed to be the same from person to person--albeit with respect to different statements--and which is the universal point of origin for all meaning, the existential noumenon for which the Q sort provides a phenomenal realization.

A virtue of Q technique is that the operant responses which it induces are capable of factor analytic representation. A Q sort is like a photograph of subjectivity in action, held still for detailed factor analytic inspection. Stephenson's paper on factor scores, first written in 1965 but published below for the first time, outlines the statistical substructure of Q factors and illustrates the way in which *factor scores* in Q method permit deeper probes into phenomena than are normally available in R methodology, which relies on *factor loadings*. The difference is fundamentally a matter of focus: In R method, attention is directed to the nature of the *objects* (attributes, traits) that are bound together as revealed in the matrix of factor loadings; in Q, attention is directed to the nature of the *links* (common attitudes, feelings, and other self manifestations) which hold the objects together, and this information is contained in the array of factor scores.

Stephenson's formulations show the statistical elegance underlying inferences in Q, but it is rarely necessary or warranted to dwell on them, and for persons accustomed to employing Q technique on a somewhat regular basis, these formulations have become incorporated into *normal science*, as Kuhn might say--i.e., they have been taken for granted and routinized in prepackaged computer programs.

In their paper on "Operant Attitude Segmentation and Marketing Decisions," for example, Mauldin, Sutherland, and Hofmeister illustrate the way in which scores at the 'miniscule level' provide the basis for policy recommendations at the promotional stage of the policy process. They imply that people *need* efficiency and security in their economic and banking affairs, but that some people *want* this service in one form rather than another as a matter of preference rooted in self-referent exigencies and their accompanying images. As the modern equivalent of Plato's philosopher-advisor to the king, the sophisticated policy consultant must be prepared to recommend those strategies congruent with self-related values and routines which are already in operation, else the likelihood of adoption is apt to be limited. In the process of accomplishing this, Mauldin, Sutherland, and Hofmeister show that contemporary principles of self-psychology are as well known in the world of business as they are in any university department of psychology.

A new scientific truth [or methodology] does not triumph by convincing its opponents and making them see the light, but rather because its opponents eventually die, and a new generation grows up that is familiar with it. (Max Planck)