

## EDITOR'S FORWARD

The general intent of this *Newsletter* is to provide a communication link among persons with an interest in the scientific study of subjectivity, specifically as it has been advanced by William Stephenson under the rubric of 'Q methodology.' For persons only casually acquainted with the issues involved, this proposal may be easily mistaken as a celebration of the Q-sort technique and the method of factor analysis. This is in part true, for it is often difficult to separate knowledge from the means employed in securing it--witness the relationship of free association to psychoanalysis, the Skinner-box to operant learning theory, variance analysis to psychological and agricultural experimentation, the telescope to astronomy, and the questionnaire and random sample to public opinion research to mention but a few.

Technique and method merely show the way to proceed, however, and in this respect we wish to avoid the plight of those seekers-after-truth who, upon having it pointed out to them, became more interested in examining the pointing finger than in pursuing the directions indicated. The phenomenon of human subjectivity has frequently been pointed to in the same way--by Kierkegaard, James Ward, Mead, and Sartre among others --but it was only with the advent of Q methodology that it became possible to engage in systematic examinations from an operant standpoint free of the arbitrary categories and reductionist tendencies intrinsic to 'R methodology.' It is in support of technical and methodological pursuits in 'the directions indicated' that this *Newsletter* will endeavor to contribute.

We have incorporated the newsletter title, *Operant Subjectivity*, from Stephenson's little-known paper on factor theory, which is published here for the broader audience it deserves, and in future issues we intend to give prominence to other of his papers. Also ap-

pearing in this issue is the beginning (really the continuance) of a bibliographic listing of references on Q-technique applications. Readers are encouraged to keep us 'up to date' by bringing to our attention the numerous published and unpublished studies that will undoubtedly, but unintentionally, be overlooked.

We also encourage the submission of brief (8-12 double-spaced pages) think-pieces on technical, methodological, theoretical, and substantive issues of general interest to an audience composed of psychologists, journalists, political scientists, and others. Especially welcome are news notes of on-going work and other bits of information and gossip which would be of interest to this specialized audience, e.g., notices concerning the availability of Q-related reprints, conference papers, etc.; please include any per-item xeroxing and/or mailing cost you would have to charge to make your papers available. In addition, if there is anything about Q that 'you always wanted to know but were afraid to ask,' ask it anyway. Our combined readership represents considerable experience, and someone will surely be able to suggest a practical solution to the problem posed.

Finally, feel free to bring this newsletter to the attention of students and colleagues who might have interest in it. Library subscriptions are also encouraged.

Needless to say, your suggestions and comments will be given prompt and serious attention.

*Steven R. Brown*  
Editor