

A REJOINDER TO GOODSTEIN

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We agree with Goodstein that his measures of "rigidity" are not highly correlated with each other or with his measures of social attitudes (1,2). We raise two questions with him and the authors whose methods he uses (3). Is the behavior, "rigidity," located within the individual? Is "rigidity," admittedly a very exciting notion, the simplest explanation of such behavior?

First, Goodstein assumes "that the results of our rigidity tests are indications of some condition or some process within the individual" (1, p. 350). We assume, however, that the stimulus situation must be accounted for before a behavior may be attributed to "some process within the individual." The quasi-psychophysics employed to study personality variables does not avail itself of physics, as psychophysics does, for the selection and control of stimuli. The burden to understand and control the stimulus rests entirely upon the psychologist. When words are used as stimuli, *E* must refer to standardized reports from colleagues whose specialty is language. When formulae become stimuli, logic and mathematics offer means by which to control our studies. The most recent *E* is responsible for the selection and control of stimuli, otherwise each experiment would only repeat or confound errors of the past.

Second, if "it is quite possible that an *S* could grasp the formula on the training problems and could continue to use it throughout the test in the interests of the most systematic and rapid handling of the problem" (1, p. 351), then we submit that "simplicity," what Goodstein calls "the most systematic and rapid handling of the problem," meets the criterion of Ockham's razor. The problems of psychology are sufficiently difficult that we do not profit from increasing their complexity by introducing personality dynamics to explain stimulus-response propositions.

REFERENCES

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3. GRACE, H. A., & ARMSTRONG, E. A. Problem-solving simplicity and "rigidity." *Psychol. Reports*, 1955, 1, 369-370.

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