really proceeds? Why not settle for psychology? Such a
surrender of the epistemological burden to psychology is a
move that was disallowed in earlier times as circular
reasoning. If the epistemologist's goal is validation of the
grounds of empirical science, he defeats his purpose by
using psychology or other empirical science in the
validation. However, such scruples against circularity have
little point once we have stopped dreaming of deducing
science from observation. If we are out simply to understand
the link between observation and science, we are well
advised to use any available information, including that
provided by the very science whose link with observation
we are seeking to understand.

And Quine has the following to say about the failure of Carnap's
reductive program in the *Aufbau*:[12]

To relax the demand for definition, and settle for a kind of
reduction that does not eliminate, is to renounce the last
remaining advantage that we supposed rational recon-
struction to have over straight psychology; namely, the
advantage of translational reduction. If all we hope for is a
reconstruction that links science to experience in explicit
ways short of translation, then it would seem more sensible
to settle for psychology. Better to discover how science is in
fact developed and learned than to fabricate a fictitious
structure to a similar effect.

If a task is entirely hopeless, if we know it cannot be executed, no
doubt it is rational to abandon it; we would be better off doing
something else that has some hope of success. We can agree with
Quine that the "validation"—that is, logical deduction—of science on
the basis of observation cannot be had; so it is rational to abandon
this particular epistemological program, if indeed it ever was a pro-
gram that anyone seriously undertook. But Quine's recommenda-
tions go further. In particular, there are two aspects of Quine's pro-
posals that are of special interest to us: first, he is not only advising
us to quit the program of "validating science", but urging us to take
up another specific project, an empirical psychological study of our
cognitive processes; second, he is also claiming that this new pro-
gram replaces the old, that both programs are part of something ap-