

Proceedings of the Iowa Academy of Science

Volume 36 | Annual Issue

Article 104

1929

The Uses and Abuses of the Questionary Method

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Recommended Citation

Ruckmick, Christian A. (1929) "The Uses and Abuses of the Questionary Method," *Proceedings of the Iowa Academy of Science*, 36(1), 343-343.

Available at: <https://scholarworks.uni.edu/pias/vol36/iss1/104>

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A STUDY OF ANTAGONISTIC HABITS

MARTIN F. FRITZ

A single rat given 6000 trials (50 trials per day) for a period of four months on a dual choice apparatus, showed no ability to reduce the time in turning from one learned stimulus (a light) to the opposite stimulus (no light). No evidence of insight was found but merely rote or mechanical learning. A human being would probably solve such a problem quickly by means of verbal cues. A possible interpretation that the old habit is not "torn down" but only inhibited or suppressed. Same results found with three other rats given 2000 trials each.

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THE USES AND ABUSES OF THE QUESTIONARY METHOD

CHRISTIAN A. RUCKMICK

The author aims to survey briefly the origin and history of this method in psychology and to review critically recent resolutions and laboratory attitudes adopted in connection with the method.

The weaknesses of the method are briefly summarized under five captions:

1. Categorical nature of reptiles.
2. Uncontrolled method of answering.
3. Scientific value of interpretation of results.
4. Illusory character of statistical treatment.
5. The meaning of unreturned replies.

Four advantages are described:

1. Large number of cases treated in the establishment of norms.
2. Indices obtained for further investigation.
3. Gathering of data not otherwise acceptable.
4. Formulation and crystallization of problems.

The author's experience in sending out questionnaires and in answering them is briefly set forth.

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