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Summaries

Thinking about defense, a semantic approach

by H. J. C. Rebel

Several philosophers of science claim the context of discovery in scientific research to be a realm of irrational and alogical behaviour. In this article is stated, that at least a semantic analysis of the main concepts of social research can be considered as a necessary preliminary in theory construction. The implications of this methodological conception is shown from an analysis of two main concepts out of the field of war and peace research: militarism and pacifism. Both concepts appear, contrary to expectation, not to be opposite poles of one continuum, but do form two separate constructs. Nevertheless, there exists a special type of relation between these concepts, which in semantics is known as: inverse opposition. In the course of the article an operationalisation of both concepts has been performed and a systematic test-program has been carried out, which showed the scale construction to be trustworthy. Finally a crossing of the two scales sustained the assertability of the semantic theory of inverse opposition. The article closes upon a system-theoretical picture of the used methodical procedures: a systemmodel of methodology.

Age and emancipation: the development of political interest in the Netherlands

by Jan van Deth

In this research note the developments in political interest in the Netherlands at the mass level, are described for the period 1970-1981. There seems to be a very minor increase in the number of people presenting themselves as very interested in politics. No clear indications can be found for the existence of interest cycles in accordance with election campaigns.

The well-known differences in political interest between age groups or sex groups are apparent in each and every dataset analysed here. However, birth cohort

and age group tables do not show consistent patterns with either a cohort or a life cycle interpretation. This conclusion holds both for the number of very interested people as well as for the average level of interest in each category. Panel data for the period 1974-1979 show a remarkable increase of the average level of interest among young woman. This result is most likely due to a revival of the woman's liberation movement in the 1970's. But despite this average increase, the number of females presenting themselves as very interested in politics, remains much lower than that of males in each age group.