



At various times and places, **Philip J. Runkel** assisted a land surveyor, staged and directed theatricals, rode in a Goodyear blimp, worked as an engineering draftsman for a project to rebuild the Panama Canal, and marched in civil rights protests. He held a U.S. patent in switchboard circuits. He taught geometry in high schools and topographic computing in the army.

For 50 years, he taught and wrote in the fields of social psychology, school organization, research methods, statistics, and organizational consulting. Runkel was Professor Emeritus of Psychology and of Education at the University of Oregon. His work as an organizational consultant began in 1968. He never did learn to play the piano.

Publications include *Research on Human Behavior: A Systematic Guide to Method* (with Joseph E. McGrath), *Handbook of Organization Development in Schools* (4th edition, with Richard A. Schmuck), *People as Living Things; The Psychology of Perceptual Control*, several other books, and several dozen articles and chapters.

What people say about this book

Like a detective in the heat of investigating a crime, a psychological researcher hunts feverishly among the data for principles not evident to the casual observer. Even in the excitement of the hunt, however, a cooling pause, perhaps a refreshing touch of rain, can permit a reassessment of goals and methods. Such a refreshing rain shower is *Casting Nets and Testing Specimens* by Philip J. Runkel.

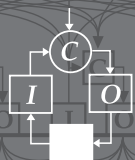
In his book, Runkel reviews current psychological research methods (i.e., 'casting nets') and tells the reader in an easily understandable way what kinds of information the methods do and do not provide. Any research method is a tool appropriate in some but not all situations. The mainstream research tools of psychology are not sufficient to explain individual behavior and its causes.

Following this review, the reader is familiarized with the concept of causation and with W. T. Powers's Perceptual Control Theory, the framework necessary for a change in perspective on human behavior (i.e., 'testing specimens'). The author explains how an appropriate investigation of causation in individual human behavior should be designed and then expands the view to an interaction between individuals.

The clear didactic concept, the many instructive examples, and the entertaining writing style make the pages virtually fly by.

I recommend this book to all advanced students of psychology who already have acquired a good knowledge of statistics and research methodology. They will appreciate the critique of mainstream research paradigms in contemporary psychology and will be astonished that there is a new and fascinating way to think about human behavior.

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