APPENDIX IV (continued)

E. Reliability

The reliability of the foregoing data was treated by the most frequently used of objective treatments: analysis by an independent observer, the content analysis equivalent of the control group. A randomly selected sample of the universe, a supply of coding forms, a copy of the list of categories, and oral instructions were given to the tester.

He was instructed to read the selections, to decide on the subject of each, and, using the category list, to find the best category for each of the subjects he had chosen. No prescribed list of subjects was given to him. When he had chosen the subjects, and matched them with categories, he entered the category number in the appropriate space of the coding form.

Content analysis studies with a 90 percent agreement between tester and researcher on category coding are considered reliable. On this test, using no trial test beforehand to train the tester, using no elaborate set of instruction to guide difficult choices, and, because the tester was very busy and unavailable through much of the test period, using no communication whatever between the author and the tester, the agreement on category coding, or the reliability level, was 92.7 percent, 2.7 percent better than the 90 percent required. The only disagreements arose in a number of selections where nearly equal treatment was given each of two categories and no clear choice was dictated.