

Chapman L J & Chapman J P. *Disordered thought in schizophrenia*.  
New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1973. 359 p.  
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This book reviews the better-known theories of schizophrenic thought disorder, together with the research evidence for each theory. Methodological problems are a focus of this review. Research designs for testing hypotheses about differential deficit receive special attention. [The *Science Citation Index*® (SCI®) and the *Social Sciences Citation Index*® (SSCI®) indicate that this book has been cited in over 205 publications since 1973.]

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"This book is primarily concerned with schizophrenics' differential deficits, that is, their greater deficit on some kinds of tasks than on others. Most investigators of schizophrenics' disordered thought have studied differential deficits, rather than single deficits, because schizophrenics tend to do worse than normal subjects on almost every kind of task. When we wrote this book, we had been involved with research on schizophrenic thought disorder for almost ten years. We found ourselves puzzled by the many contradictory findings in the field. During a seminar discussion with graduate students, we began to suspect that some of our findings, as well as those of other investigators of differential deficit, might somehow reflect the patient's generalized deficit. We worked to explore this possibility in a systematic way. About this time, our eccentric dean was insisting that all important contributions to science are made through books rather than journal articles. We decided to cater to his whimsy, although by the time we finished the book we had left that

school and its dean to move to the University of Wisconsin. The book is the result of several years of work and many discussions with graduate students. Fortunately, the National Institute of Mental Health supported its writing with a grant.

"The reason for this book becoming widely cited is, we believe, in part because of its treatment of theories of schizophrenic thought disorder, but more because of its treatment of methodological problems in the design of research on cognitive deficit. We show in this book (as well as in a paper<sup>1</sup> published that same year) that generalized performance deficit in schizophrenia is easily mistaken for specific differential deficit because subjects with such generalized deficit show their greatest mean difference from normal subjects on tasks which have the greatest reliability and the greatest variance. These are tasks which tend—other things being equal—to be composed of items in the middle range of difficulty. The book shows that a surprisingly large number of research findings turn out to be artifacts of this principle. Both the book and an article<sup>1</sup> in the *Psychological Bulletin* discuss practical solutions that involve matching tasks on reliability and difficulty. A more recent article<sup>2</sup> offers a somewhat more general approach.

"The role of generalized poor performance as a potential artifact in studies of differential deficit has gradually become widely accepted in studies of schizophrenic thought disorder but has only recently begun to be recognized by investigators who deal with other content areas. It is, of course, equally important in many studies of other low scoring groups, such as children, brain damaged patients, and retarded persons, as well as in many studies in which accuracy scores vary as a function of either subjects or conditions. For example, we are currently studying similar psychometric issues in the related but somewhat more complicated psychometric problem of measuring the relative effectiveness of right and left hemisphere functioning."

1. Chapman L J & Chapman J P. Problems in the measurement of cognitive deficit. *Psychol. Bull.* 79:380-5, 1973.  
(Cited 60 times.)

2. .... The measurement of differential deficit. *J. Psychiat. Res.* 14:303-11, 1978.