

## 0 Preface

I worked on this subject for five years. Now that the dissertation is finished, I would like to return to 1990, retrieve my old knowledge, and compare it with my present views. Such a comparison would also inform me about my debts, which I intend to acknowledge in this preface. Regrettably, the old programs have not been saved, so I can only tell the truth as I know it now.

It is an honour and a pleasure to state my debt to Jan Elshout, my promotor, who supervised this project from its beginning. He is a tireless thinker, who commands a vast amount of knowledge, has a profound respect for reality (scientific and otherwise), and really wants to understand thought. Jan educated me into the writing of this book. I can no longer distinguish which ideas were originally his, because many of them are now my own.

Ronald Hamel, with whom I must have drunk approximately 2000 cups of coffee (5 years \* 40 weeks \* 5 days \* 2 cups), Annette de Groot, and Christiaan Hamaker read several of my manuscripts, pointing out what was wrong and offering valuable suggestions for improvement. Jeroen Raaijmakers, also, has advised me on several occasions. Nico van Ruijven was always prepared to explain, once more, the workings of some computer program, and formatted several sets of data. Anny Bosman and John Hoeks each programmed an experiment, and Janet van Hell and Anneke Mooij helped me as organizers of the Testweek. I cannot individually thank my subjects, but their contribution is self-evident. The Department of Psychology of the University of Amsterdam has supported this research by adopting it as an AIO-project.

Rob Milikowski, my husband, has not always liked the way I treated his good friends, the numbers, whom he understands so much better than I do. I think it is fortunate for our relationship that they have come out unscathed, with the exception, perhaps, of 67. This number may need some special attention to restore its self-confidence. I am sure Rob will invent a proper way to provide it.

My brother, the designer Marcel Bakker, transformed my text into this book.

I hesitate to thank my parents in this context. I am well aware of their support, but I also know that they like poetry better than numbers.

Amsterdam, august, 1995.