

RESEARCH VARIABLES

- **VARIABLE** ~ any stimulus factor or behavior that can change on some dimension and that can be observed, sometimes controlled, and measured. In scientific investigations variables that can be quantified with precision are preferred.
- **INDEPENDENT VARIABLE** ~ in an experiment, the variable under the control of the scientist/investigator and which is believed to have the potential to alter or influence the dependent variable (q.v.).
- **DEPENDENT VARIABLE** ~ in an experiment, the response or behavior being studied in order to determine if it has been influenced by or altered by the independent variable (q.v.).
- **EXTRANEIOUS VARIABLE** ~ in an experiment, a variable or variables that **COULD** have an effect on the dependent variable but which are controlled so that it does, or they do, not do that. When uncontrolled extraneous variables influence experimental outcomes the results are said to be confounded, i.e., made ambiguous.