means the only way attitudes can be formed. As we will see in a later section of this chapter, feelings and behavior can also be primary in the formation of attitudes.

C. Measuring Attitudes

Earlier we noted that attitudes are hypothetical cognitive structures without a physical basis. How, then, can we measure attitudes? Several strategies have been devised.

1. Self-Report Measures

The most common approach to measuring attitudes uses a self-report format, in which respondents express their attitudes through verbal or written means. One of the earliest attempts to create such a method was outlined by Louis Thurstone in a 1928 paper entitled “Attitudes Can Be Measured.” The Thurstone procedure begins by assembling a large pool of statements that express varying levels of favorableness and unfavorableness toward an attitude issue. The items are then shown to a panel of judges who assign a scale value to each item according to its favorability or unfavorability. The scaled items are then presented to respondents who select items with which they agree. Finally, an attitude score is formed by calculating the mean or median value for all such items. The top section of Table 6.1 presents an illustration of this approach. (Note that respondents don’t see the scale values when making their choices.)

Because it requires an initial scaling procedure, the Thurstone method is rather time-consuming and cumbersome. In 1932, Renis Likert devised an attitude scale that overcame these problems. The Likert scale is illustrated in the middle section of Table 6.1, using portions of a scale designed by Batson and Ventis (1982) to measure religious attitudes. Like Thurstone, Likert began by selecting a number of statements relevant to an attitude issue. However, instead of then presenting these issues to a panel of judges to be sorted and rated, Likert simply asked respondents to indicate their level of agreement with each item using a multiple-choice format. After reversing the