Retroductive models are tested by logic for self-consistency and coherence, and are confirmed or disconfirmed by the relevant data.

As to their <u>form</u>, retroductive models, conceptual gestalts, or mental "nets" may be of various sizes, and may attempt to "catch" smaller or larger sets of data. They are attempted explanations of the meaning of sets of data. They may be used to interrelate sets of data or models, even very large models.

As to their <u>force</u>, retroductive constructs make the claim that they are probable, and in varying degrees. Certainty is found in the data, not in the constructs.

<u>Proposal</u>

Thus far various theologians have proposed individual ways of doing theology -- whether inductive, deductive, or retroductive. Is it possible that all three kinds of reasoning actually play a role in theological theorizing?

Let us analyze a specific example of theologizing to see what kind of reasoning is employed.

In formulating the doctrine of the nature of human beings (generic man), we first collect biblical data and draw the <u>generalization</u> that man is comprised of a material part and a non-material part; these two parts function holistically (as a unit) in this life.

We also collect other biblical data and draw the <u>generalization</u> that man survives physical death, not only through a resurrection in the end time, but also in a conscious existence during the interim between physical death and resurrection.

Now since the <u>material</u> part of man decays and decomposes into dust following physical death, we <u>deduce</u> that <u>it</u> cannot be the part of man that survives and consciously exists following death. We further <u>deduce</u> that since the <u>material</u> part of man does not survive physical death, it must be the <u>non-material</u> part that survives death in a conscious existence.

We collect still more biblical data and draw the <u>generalization</u> that in the resurrection the non-material part of man is reunited with his transformed material part.

We now adduce various "models" to see which one best "fits" these generalizations and deductions. We are now aware that a preferred model must account for the data that man in his embodied state prior to physical death functions as a unitary, holistic being; that in his disembodied state following physical death he continues to function in his non-material part as a unitary being, even though his material part returns to dust; and that in his reembodied state following physical resurrection he functions once again as a unitary, holistic being.

Comparing our findings with those of various theologians, we find that simple monistic or dualistic models of man's nature do not account for all of these data, and we therefore <u>deduce</u> that such models are inadequate. However, a model that views man's nature as <u>ontologically dualistic but</u>