In the main volume Professor Feyerabend attacked dominant notions of rationality by arguing that what we tend to count as rational is set by an historically relative tradition. In this sense, then, "irrationality" may prove more valuable than "rationality" by establishing new and esteemed traditions. He concluded with a challenge: "...rationalism is not an agency that forms an otherwise chaotic material, but is itself material to be formed by personal decisions. The questions 'What shall we do? How shall we proceed? What standards are there to guide us?' however are answered by saying: 'You are grown up now, children, and so you have to find your own way.'" Here he briefly, but forcefully, answers objections offered from a more "rationalistic" perspective.

1. Your article ends with the advice that the researchers find their own way. In this you suggest that "personal decisions" are to be made with rational guidance. Yet in the same paragraph you suggest that rules and standards should be used, extended and amended. Aren't these two views inconsistent? Isn't it that those who do break into new territory have rational grounds for their movement (e.g., the inadequacy of old rules and standards)?

It is correct that I advise researchers to find their own way. It is not correct that "in this" I suggest that their decisions be made with rational guidance. I say quite explicitly that the choice that confronts a scientist "cannot be replaced by an appeal to standards" because it concerns these standards. A man who introduces a new form of rationality with new standards is in conflict with
existing standards and is judged as irrational by them. Nor does he have new standards to guide him, for he is just introducing them, bit by bit. He therefore acts without rhyme and reason. Later generations, of course, base their judgments on the completed new form or rationality, may find his procedure reasonable and without reproach and may condemn the defender of the status quo. The defender of the status quo, foreseeing such developments has no "objective" reasons for his own form of rationality either. Of course he likes it, because he is familiar with it. The inadequacy of old rules and standards, however, can be discovered only by comparison with new rules which therefore must be introduced before the old rules and standards have been found to be inadequate. Turn it as you may—the idea that all our actions are carried out because we have rational grounds for them is either moonshine, or theology.

2. Doesn't your own position amount to a definite conception of rationality on which you judge scientific episodes to be rational or irrational?

Judgments of irrationality made by me do not express any opinions of my own but are parts of reductions ad absurdum of various theories of rationality. Thus, addressing Popperians (for example) I say: "According to you it is rational to increase criticism and irrational to decrease it. Yet Galileo, whom you adore as a hero of science uses ad hoc hypotheses, reinterprets the evidence so that it fits his favorite hypothesis and generally rigs the show in such a fashion that criticism of this hypothesis is decreased. Hence, using your criterion of rationality you must say that Galileo acts in a most irrational fashion." My criticism of Lakatos, of inductivism, etc., has the same form. It is therefore not possible to use judgments of irrationality made by me to infer that I have a conception of rationality.

3. Many believe that there is no logic of discovery—science in the sense of discovery may not, then, follow rules; it may not be rational. Rationality comes in, however, with confirmation and communication of results. Could it be that your statements conflates discovery, confirmation and communication and that your case really only holds for discovery?

As your readers ought to know, the theories of rationality I criticize have been invented to deal with the context of justification. My criticism, therefore, and the generalizations I draw from it also deal only with this context. Besides, the distinction between a context of justification and a context of discovery is a distinction without a difference and so no conflating can ever occur.
4. Are you backing philosophers of science or do you take seriously the weakness of things like medicine?

I am not backing philosophers of science. Quite the contrary, I am in favor of abolishing the whole enterprise (I have explained my reasons in detail in a German essay with the title: 'Philosophy of Science - an as yet unexamined form of insanity?'). I do take seriously the weaknesses of science (and of medicine) as they can be used in arguments against the exclusive position science has in our societies and for the study of voodoo, astrology, tribal medicine, etc., etc. I do not understand the "or" in the question.