

**BETWEEN THE LABORATORY,
THE SCHOOL, AND THE COMMUNITY:
THE PSYCHOLOGY OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT,
TORONTO, 1916-1956**

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ABSTRACT

In the twentieth century, Canadian psychologists have been involved with the educational system and the community at several points in time. In this article, the psychology of human development as developed at the Department of Psychology at the University of Toronto from 1916 to 1956 is investigated. In a variety of projects, the mental health of children was investigated in educational settings while measures were designed and tested to prevent maladjustment and to promote mental health. Initially, research and intervention aimed at adjusting school children to the educational setting. Later, a critical perspective on social institutions and Canadian society was articulated.

INTRODUCTION

In his overview of the development of Canadian psychology, William Line (1951a), professor of psychology at the University of Toronto, president of the World Federation for Mental Health from 1951-52, and advocate of community psychology and action research, stated that "the pioneers of Canadian psychological thought, without exception, studied man [*sic*] in the community, with great faith in his [*sic*] potentialities" (p. 151). Line was referring to a group of Canadian psychologists who, after World War I, pioneered a psychology of human development in close association with psychiatrists interested in mental health. They viewed human development as resulting from learning, "a perpetual and continuous phenomenon in every child from the time he [*sic*] is born until he [*sic*] dies" (Blatz, 1934, p. 4). They believed that human beings attained fulfilment in their lives through continuously encountering opportunities for development and growth in their communities: at home, school, or work. Psychologists advised parents, teachers, educational administrators, and managers how to foster mental health among the individuals for whom they were responsible. Initially, their activities aimed at adjusting school children to the educational setting, which largely was taken for granted. After World War II, Canadian psychologists invited school children and employees to become participants in this process by stimulating them to express and discuss their own views on mental health issues through various activities. Children and employees were no longer the objects of mental health research and intervention; rather, they had become participants in the project of exploring, enhancing, and maintaining their own mental health. At the

same time, a critical perspective on social institutions and Canadian society in general was articulated.

Canadian community psychology has important historical precedents in the work of a group of University of Toronto psychologists who, between 1916 and 1956, designed investigative practices for mental health and child development. Following the functionalist program developed at the University of Chicago by John Dewey, George Herbert Mead, and James Rowland Angell, this group designed an holistic psychology of human development by analyzing the importance of the interaction of individuals with their environment in fostering social adjustment and mental health. Their research centred around the concept of the motivated individual dealing with life's daily challenges by developing effective coping strategies. Because they doubted whether challenges typical to real life could be reproduced adequately in a laboratory setting, they developed observation strategies and experimental methods that could be used in natural settings, specifically the educational system. Because of their interest in mental health in growing children, the Toronto group deliberately allied itself with education and medicine. Within the Faculty of Medicine, they taught courses in the psychology of human development, emphasizing the importance of a humanistic approach to patients and analysing the role disease played in their lives (Bott, 1928a, 1936). The close relationship to the Faculty of Medicine was instrumental in the Department of Psychology at the University of Toronto, in 1926, becoming the first in Canada to be institutionally independent from Philosophy.

In this article, I provide an overview of the research conducted by this group of psychologists at the University of Toronto. While several other psychologists—among them Samuel Laycock at the University of Saskatchewan, and Gordon Muncie and W.T.B. Mitchell at McGill University—conducted research relevant to mental health, it was the Toronto Department which took the lead. The historian of Canadian psychology C. Roger Myers (1965) stated about the Toronto department that "psychology in Canada really did start there" (p. 4). This department was chaired by Edward A. Bott from 1926 to 1956, who had effectively led the group from as early as 1916. In his presidential address to the Canadian Psychological Association (CPA), Karl Bernhardt (1947) described Bott as "the accepted and respected leader of Canadian psychology for over a quarter of a century," adding that "we still look to him for leadership" (p. 51). Bott also has been described as the "dean of Canadian psychology and the chief architect of its development" (Bernhardt, 1957, p. 130), "the 'great man' of the period [the first ten years of the CPA]," and "the recognized leader of the flock" (Wright, 1974, p. 130; for the history of psychology in Canada in general see Myers & Wright, 1982). Before his studies in psychology, Bott had been a teacher for several years. In 1912, he was appointed as instructor in the Psychological Laboratory. Although he had written a dissertation on the history of the scientific method (parts of which were published as Bott, 1923b), for reasons which remain unclear, he never submitted it to receive his Ph.D.

From the perspective of mental health research, Bott's colleagues William A. Blatz and William Line have been the most influential. Blatz received his medical degree from the University of Toronto and his Ph.D. from the University of Chicago in 1924. At Chicago, he worked with the functionalist psychologist Har-

vey Carr. Blatz became the director of the laboratory nursery school, which was established at the University of Toronto in 1924 to investigate young children. He was Canada's most well-known child psychologist and became notorious for his fondness for making controversial statements on child rearing during his lectures and in his publications (Motyer, 1991). Later, he was involved with the research on the Dionne quintuplets (Blatz, 1938). After holding several teaching positions in Canada, William Line studied in London under Charles Spearman and received his Ph.D. in 1929 on the growth of perception in young children (Line, 1931a). After conducting a number of highly technical studies on the objective characteristics of mental health (Line, 1935; Line & Griffin, 1935), he became increasingly interested in issues related to mental health and education. After World War II, he became an important spokesperson for the mental health movement (Babarik 1976, 1979).

A fresh look at the research program of Bott, Blatz, and Line is instructive for a number of reasons. First, it reveals a functionalist orientation in psychological research conducted not in laboratories but within educational settings, which deserves attention for being an uniquely innovative investigative practice (Pols, 1999a). Second, Bott gave explicit attention to the practical organization of psychology and the discipline's social responsibility. And third, the research conducted at the University of Toronto was a significant antecedent to today's community psychology. Canadian community psychology is not a recent development; it is at least several decades old and harks back to a tradition which was initiated as early as 1916. Bott's research programme had been successful up until World War II, after which it was overtaken by experimental psychological research. It is revealing to investigate the factors which contribute to the rise and decline of a community-oriented psychology in Canada.

PSYCHIATRY, PSYCHOLOGY, AND MENTAL HEALTH

The initial impetus for the program of psychological research in human development at Toronto came from the attempts of a number of leading North American psychiatrists, during the first decades of the twentieth century, to expand the activities of their discipline beyond the confines of the mental hospital. A number of these psychiatrists organized the National Committee for Mental Hygiene in the United States in 1909 and advocated the establishment of out-patient clinics and psychopathic hospitals, the implementation of eugenic measures, immigration restriction, the institutionalization of the mentally retarded, and the widespread application of mental tests (Dain, 1980; Richardson, 1989; Pols, 1997). C.K. Clarke, a leading Canadian psychiatrist and dean of the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Toronto, propagated such initiatives in Canada (see, for example, Clarke, 1923). Although his interest in eugenics and immigration restriction are alien to most psychiatrists and psychologists today, his aim of making psychiatry—and with it, psychology and social work—relevant to the solution of social problems inspired subsequent developments, among them those described in this article. In 1921, Clarke was instrumental in attracting extensive funding from the Rockefeller Foundation to improve medical education and research at the

University of Toronto. He also was successful in arranging funds for mental health research.

In 1914, Clarke established a psychiatric clinic where the psychological make-up of troublesome children (referred by educational authorities, the juvenile court, and welfare agencies) could be investigated (Conboy, 1916; Clarke, 1918; see also MacDougall, 1990). The psychiatrist Clarence M. Hincks, who was school medical inspector for the Toronto Department of Health, was employed at this clinic (Roland, 1990). In search of assistance in administering mental tests, Hincks sought contact with psychologists from the Department of Philosophy and invited them to collaborate with him. At this time, however, these psychologists were unacquainted with mental testing, having been engaged in laboratory research following Edward B. Titchener's structuralism, initially under the guidance of the German psychologist August Kirschmann (Myers, 1982; Hoff, 1992). After Kirschmann returned to Germany in 1909, these psychologists were left without leadership. Bott and his colleagues eagerly accepted Hincks's invitation and, encouraged by the philosopher George Sidney Brett, converted their laboratory into a clinic for testing children (Hincks, 1916). The experimentalist W.G. Smith (1919, 1920), following Clarke's lead, investigated immigration. In the following years, several psychologists participated in a number of school surveys conducted under the guidance of Clarke and Hincks (e.g., Clarke & Hincks, 1919; Clarke, 1919; Morphy & Tait, 1921) and standardized the Stanford-Binet on Canadian samples (Pratt, 1921). Through the application of mental tests, psychologists found new tasks and research opportunities relevant to educational administration and mental retardation, the latter having then been perceived as posing a particularly alarming problem (Simmons, 1982). After the establishment of compulsory education in the 1910s, education became a subject of serious social concern, and various educational reform movements were initiated in which psychologists were active (Sutherland, 1976).

In 1916, the group of psychologists at Toronto embarked on another project for which they had no previous experience. As a consequence of Canadian involvement in World War I, hundreds of wounded and mutilated soldiers returned to Canadian shores. That year, Bott, with the aid of Blatz, organized a physical rehabilitation clinic where these soldiers were trained to regain lost muscle function through graded exercises designed to meet each soldier's specific needs and remaining abilities. Central to this rehabilitation work was the attempt to invigorate the soldier to improve his situation himself, thereby inciting him to use all his efforts to succeed at the exercises specifically designed for him (Bott, 1918, 1919a, 1919b). The set-up of this rehabilitation work, combining appropriate, challenging exercises and activating soldiers' motivation to recuperate by doing them, became the central model for all subsequent psychological research at Toronto, as well as for some further laboratory research (Bott, 1923a; Dodge & Bott, 1927). The project achieved positive results, eventually led to the establishment of Departments in Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy at the University, and further reinforced the relationship between psychology and medicine. This relationship was cemented by the establishment of the Canadian National Committee for Mental Hygiene (later renamed as the Canadian Mental Health Association) in 1918, with Clarke as medical director, Hincks as secretary, and Bott as head of the research

committee (Griffin, 1989). The establishment of this Committee provided the impetus for the institutional separation of psychology and philosophy. In 1920, Clarke was listed as Director of the Psychological Laboratory; in 1926, the Department of Psychology was formally recognized and Bott was appointed chairman.

RESEARCH PROJECTS

The psychologists at the University of Toronto organized several research projects investigating the development of adjustment, or mental health, in school children. Initially, the aim was to design mechanisms which would instill conformity in pupils. Later, pupils were invited to express their own opinions about mental health matters and a more critical perspective developed. This perspective was only fully articulated after World War II, when projects which would qualify as community psychology were initiated. At that point, several of the initial assumptions of the early investigations were called into question.

The Antecedents of High-School Drop-Outs

The first extensive psychological research project was conducted by Edward A. Bott in 1918 and 1919. It investigated how Toronto's elementary and high schools functioned, with particular emphasis on students who dropped out before graduating. Using the records of the Board of Education, Bott (1920) traced the educational careers of these pupils and concluded that, in most cases, their attendance had been spotty and their grades unsatisfactory. Their work histories were similarly deficient. When Bott interviewed these former students, they claimed that their high school careers had no relevance to subsequent employment.

Bott and other educational reformers believed that schools should function to prepare youth to take their places in society. To this end, they argued that the educational system had to be structurally revised by introducing, for example, vocational training for those who planned to later embark on industrial careers. To create an organic link between school and work, Bott advocated the implementation of a central registry where records on all pupils' educational performance would be maintained. He argued that installing such an elaborate mechanism of observation and registration of school accomplishments would serve as a compelling incentive: pupils would be aware of its existence and would know that employers would be taking the data it contained into account in hiring and determining wages. This registry would make school accomplishments visible; ideally, it also would provide a mechanism through which they could be rewarded.

Bott (1929) emphasized the importance of a genetic (i.e., longitudinal) research design in the study of human development. He considered learning, increasing adjustment, and human development to be inextricably interrelated processes, and he believed that the educational system was the place *par excellence* for these processes to occur. Operating within an educational context facilitated longitudinal research tremendously, because most children remain in school for several years. In addition, schools themselves collected information about children, which could be relevant for psychological research as well. In his first project, Bott utilized data on grades and attendance which had been collected by the Board of Education, and added his own data on the industrial careers of former pupils (which he had gained

through interviews with teachers, social workers, employers, and parents). He defined adjustment as the ability to have stable school and work careers. His next project was a longitudinal investigation where data collected by the school itself were complemented by data on the social adjustment of school children, which were collected by teachers specifically trained to do so. When it could be demonstrated that particular patterns of maladjustment in school were predictors for maladjustment later in life, intervention strategies targeting such patterns could be designed and implemented.

Social Adjustment at School

In 1924, the Regal Road School Project was initiated with funding from the Rockefeller Foundation arranged by the CNCMH (Pols, 1999b). In this project, Blatz and Bott (1927) investigated the adjustment of school children to the requirements of the educational system. Specifically, they examined breaches of the school's social order, which they labelled as misdemeanours and defined as acts on the part of the pupil constituting an interruption of the classroom routine. Teachers, of course, were eminently suited to the task of identifying these behaviours, given their already established authoritative role in maintaining order in the classroom. After extensive consultation with the teachers who had been observing such misdemeanours systematically, Blatz developed a misdemeanour scoring sheet which consisted of eleven categories and more than twenty sub-categories, ranging from speaking out of turn to untidiness, disobedience, lying, and stealing. Teachers recorded all misdemeanours they observed after which the information was collected and statistically analysed in weekly, monthly, and annual increments. On the basis on these analyses, particularly troublesome pupils—that is, pupils who committed misdemeanours in several classes—could be identified and could receive corrective attention by a social worker. Teachers in whose classes an above average number of misdemeanours had been recorded also were identified in the records. Apparently, certain teachers had difficulty maintaining order, a condition which was addressed by additional training. Finally, structural problems inherent in the organization of the educational system could be identified. For example, cheating peaked in the second grade, when grading was introduced. Restlessness and lack of application were highest in the seventh grade, when children entered junior high school and faced a much more demanding curriculum. Measures were suggested to ease the strain on pupils at these particular junctures, and several manuals for teachers were published based on the Regal Road School Project research (Myers, 1939; Griffin, Laycock, & Line, 1940). In addition, Line and his students conducted a number of investigations on specific learning disabilities (Line, 1931b, 1934; Line & Kaplan, 1932; Line & Glen, 1934; Line & Wees, 1937).

The Regal Road School Project identified not only disruptive children but also classroom situations which set the stage for undesirable behaviour. As a means of rectifying the latter, Blatz favoured structural changes to the educational system over individualized therapy; he believed that such changes would be more effective in the long run. Thus, the Toronto psychologists integrated research with application by revising routine educational procedures and observing the results. According to Bott (1932), the distinction between pure and applied science was meaning-

less in this kind of psychological research since both were conducted simultaneously.

The Regal Road School Project was initiated to develop educational measures which could be applied in schools throughout Canada. Since most schools could not afford to hire psychological professionals for their implementation, such measures were instead to be implemented directly by teachers and administrators. Bott believed that psychology could only be effectively applied if its findings were disseminated as widely as possible. Rather than upholding a strategy of professional separation and accreditation, he argued, psychologists should attempt to permeate society with their theories and findings. In this light, Bott (1924, 1955) considered schools and other public institutions as the most promising venues for the successful application of psychology; their continuity, permanence, and the size of the field of application ensured the maximal dissemination of psychology's insights. For the same reason, he encouraged academic psychologists to find positions in social service agencies in order to stay in touch with the world of practical affairs.

The Laboratory Nursery School

In 1926, Blatz was appointed director of St. George's School for Child Study. Funding was provided by the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial, which also funded six other laboratory nursery schools in North America (Bernhardt, Fletcher, Johnson, Millichamp, & Northway, 1951). The nursery school placed children between the ages of 6 months and 6 years, who could then be observed over an extended period of time. The school developed a practical program which functioned as a model for nursery schools all over Canada. According to Blatz, the nursery school was a particularly suitable environment for the socialization of young children because it was organized on the basis of rational, psychological principles, in contrast to the impulsive and instinctual method of child-rearing he believed to be typical of the majority of parents. The school provided ample opportunity for free play and exploration, which Blatz thought essential to the development of initiative and poise.

According to Bott (1928b), the primary purpose of the school was to inductively establish developmental norms by observing normal children under normal circumstances. Such developmental norms could be useful in detecting early deviations from normal development and thus in guiding intervention. In the Regal Road School Project, patterns characteristic of maladjustment had been the object of investigation; in the research at St. George's School for Child Study, normal development—which was defined as the ability to conform to the standards of the nursery school—became central. The results of this research were presented to the public in several manuals on child management (Blatz & Bott, 1929, 1930; Blatz, 1940; Long & Northway, 1943), radio broadcasts, lectures, and numerous pamphlets.

In their research projects, Bott, Blatz, and their colleagues adopted the perspective of the individuals who were involved in managing children on a daily basis: teachers, social workers, and parents. At the time, the mental health of school children was defined as adjustment or conformity to the social standards of

parents and teachers. Consequently, psychologists first of all attempted to acquire insight into: (a) the way parents and teachers viewed their jobs, (b) the attitudes toward the children they were teaching or raising, and (c) the problems these children might pose to them. Only by gaining such insight could they offer parents and teachers the tools with which to better manage the children in their charge.

In these projects, children were the *object* of investigation and the *target* of intervention; they were not participants. Improving the mental health of children was the task of the responsible adults around them. However, in subsequent research projects, things changed. By introducing human relations classes in schools, psychologists invited pupils to become active participants in projects which stimulated them to develop and express their own opinions on mental health issues. In addition, psychologists began to define mental health in psychological terms rather than as conformity to educational standards.

Shy Children

In 1937, the Project on Shy Children was initiated. Of central concern in this project was a group of pupils who had thus far escaped the attention of teachers and psychologists because they were too shy to commit obvious misdemeanours or to disturb order in the classroom. Shy children often were praised as model pupils because of their compliant behaviour. The models for child development which had become popular at the time, however, emphasized action and sociability; consequently, according to psychological views of child development, these children were not at all models of optimal mental health. In shy pupils, educational and psychological criteria of desirable behaviour collided. Sociometric tests (which were first developed by J.L. Moreno (1956)) initially were administered to identify shy children; later, they were used to investigate social interaction patterns and friendships among school children (Northway, 1944, 1952). Human relations classes then were introduced in the school to foster free and open interaction. In these classes, pupils were invited to openly discuss issues of their own choosing, at times elicited by a short film, a text, or a script for open-ended role playing (Condie, 1957; Bullis & O'Malley, 1947; Bullis, 1954). In this way, school children were stimulated to articulate and apply mental health principles independently instead of being the passive subjects upon whom measures designed by psychologists and teachers were authoritatively imposed.

The experience with human relations classes led the Toronto group to redefine mental health (using psychological criteria) as the ability to sustain mutually satisfying interpersonal relationships rather than as the ability to adjust to the demands of school or society (in accordance with educational criteria). In this new perspective, pupils who conformed to the institutional demands of the educational system could be deemed less than optimally mentally healthy, while it appeared that so-called mentally healthy children did not, at times, fit in to the system. In other words, the conditions for mental health and the requirements of the educational system were now seen as possibly in opposition to one another. A similar shift in perspective occurred regarding the ideals of mental health in industry (Line, 1946b, 1948, 1951b). No longer defined as conformity to social demands, mental health was defined in psychological terms as emotional adjustment and the ability to sustain meaningful interpersonal relationships. In the Regal Road School

Project, patterns of maladjustment had been the object of investigation; in St. George's School for Child Study, normal development had become central. The Project on Shy Children investigated optimal mental health and designed measures which could foster it. These theoretical changes later were reinforced by revisions in post-war psychology and psychiatry which emphasized the importance of satisfactory interpersonal relationships in attaining and sustaining mental health.

Human relations classes lacked a clear research component. They realized mental health ideals through stimulating spontaneous interpersonal interaction among school children. Observation by teachers or psychologists was not required in these classes the way it had been in previous projects. Pupils did not function as the objects of investigation; rather, they were stimulated to become investigators themselves. The insights which they derived from discussions on issues of their choice might have been beneficial in improving their own personal situations, but they had little relevance beyond their immediate sphere and were insufficient as reference points which might serve to illuminate or further develop psychological theories.

After World War II, the principles of human relations classes were applied on a broad scale in a radio series called *In Search of Ourselves*, designed by the Canadian Mental Health Association and broadcast by the CBC. Each episode presented a dramatization of the typical problems of everyday individuals, followed by a commentary given by a psychiatrist. Listeners were encouraged to form groups to discuss these programs, thereby improving their own mental health.

WORLD WAR II AND ITS AFTERMATH

During World War II, almost all psychologists at the University of Toronto were mobilized for the war effort (Griffin, McKerracher, & Lawson, 1943; Copp & McAndrew, 1990; English, 1992). In the United States and Canada, psychologists and psychiatrists were engaged in personnel selection, in projects aimed at enhancing morale among soldiers, and in developing highly successful methods of group therapy and short-term psychotherapy for the treatment of war neurosis or battle fatigue (Grob, 1991; Herman, 1995). As a result of these successes, psychiatry's reputation grew enormously during the immediate post-war years. Brock Chisholm (Major-General and Senior Medical Officer in the Canadian Army, the future Director-General of the World Health Organization, and the first Canadian psychiatrist to open a private practice) and Harry Stack Sullivan (his American colleague) attempted to mobilize the discipline to accept its social responsibility. They urged their colleagues to become actively involved in the reconstruction of peace-time society and to advocate for the improvement of international relations with the goal of preventing future wars (Chisholm, 1946; Sullivan, 1948; Perry, 1982). Their ideas attracted international attention through the influential International Congress on Mental Health, which had been organized in London in 1948 (Flugel, 1948).

In his presidential address to the Canadian Psychological Association in 1945, Line (1945) also issued this call for action. He challenged his colleagues to assume the social responsibility of safeguarding the integrity of the individual by opposing the authority of powerful vested interests. He criticized earlier psychological work

because it had been aimed at instilling conformity and expected individuals to adjust to existing social conditions without questioning the inherent values of the dominant institutions. According to Line, psychological intervention often resulted in docility, which aided vested interests but depleted the morale of individuals. Line argued that psychologists should instead bring their findings and theories to bear on the essential conception of social purpose and the good life; society would be vastly improved, he contended, if psychological principles were woven into its very fabric, with the individual in a central position (Line, 1946b; Griffin & Line, 1946). To achieve this goal, psychology needed to be strictly independent of employers and the government; it needed to refuse to subordinate the discipline's aims to the system's ends. Line's radical proclamations were supported by only a few psychologists and other mental health professionals, who proceeded to articulate a radical reformulation of the goal of mental health intervention in society.

Human Relation Classes

The research projects undertaken by the Toronto psychologists after World War II were built on the pioneering work with human relations classes detailed above. During the war, on the basis of interviews and psychological tests administered to shy pupils, psychologists concluded that shyness did not always reflect personal problems but was indicative of the social tensions extant among different ethnic groups residing in their neighbourhoods. Intrigued by this finding, Line and his colleagues transformed the group dynamics techniques of the human relations classes from a method of fostering mental health in individual pupils to a barometer for assessing social tensions. They started to examine issues such as prejudice, intolerance, and ethnic tension in order to assess their impact on children's emotional health. In the process, they broadened their conception of mental health to include a variety of social factors. After the war, mental health professionals continuously emphasized the mutual importance of mental health and a democratic society and the damaging effects on mental health of prejudice, intolerance, and social tension.

After the war, Line developed other applications of the group dynamics techniques used in human relations classes (which he compared to Carl Rogers' client-centred psychotherapy as applied to groups) to address and resolve hidden conflicts between groups by re-establishing interpersonal communication (Line, 1950). When, for example, he applied these techniques at a national meeting of the YMCA which explored matters related to citizenship and authority, strong resentment towards the leadership of the organization surfaced (Line, 1949). In role-playing and sociodrama facilitated by Line, the disgruntled members practised ways in which they could most viably present their grievances to the representatives of the organization's leadership in anticipation of their visit the following day. Tensions were voiced and communication between factions in the organization was effectively re-established. Used in this way, group dynamics techniques could help individuals and groups to explore and address existing tension and conflict. In addition, such techniques could be used to develop skills for confronting authority and dealing with social conflict. These novel uses of the techniques developed in human relations classes were employed during the last project undertaken by the

Canadian Mental Health Association, an in-depth study of the mental health of one community, which has been fictitiously referred to as Crestwood Heights.

Crestwood Heights: Mental Health in the Community

After the war, psychiatrists and psychologists were acutely aware of the unmet mental health needs in the community-at-large which had been revealed during the war years. As part of its National Mental Health Project and generously supported by newly available federal funds, the Canadian Mental Health Association decided to investigate the mental health needs of a specific community and how they might most effectively be addressed through a variety of methods. An affluent suburb of Toronto, pseudonymously called Crestwood Heights, which already had a Child Guidance Clinic, was selected for this interdisciplinary project, which started in 1948 and was slated to run for four years. Its aims were to diagnose an entire community's mental health needs, to promote the consumption of mental health advice, and to assess the effectiveness of mental health education (Griffin & Seeley, 1952; Seeley, 1954).

In this research project, the relationship between social and psychological factors was investigated by analysing how specific cultural configurations led to tension and conflict in individuals and families. Norman Bell, who later published influential work on the sociology of the family (Bell & Vogel, 1960), started his career as part of this project. During the entire project, human relations classes were conducted with school children, teachers, and parents. In particular, during the classes held at the school, ethnic tensions in the neighbourhood between Jewish and Christian groups surfaced. Although most parents expressed no concern about these issues, they had ambivalent feelings about inter-faith dating which did not pass their children unnoticed. In addition, children expressed resentment that their lives were being rigidly regimented and their spare time filled with activities organized by parents and teachers. They had very few opportunities to initiate their own activities; when they were allowed to do so in the form of a school café, parents disapproved because they felt their children were doing "nothing at all" for hours (Seeley, Sim, & Loosley, 1956). When children organized "secret societies" (fraternities and sororities which could be joined by invitation only), parents were irate because of their undemocratic nature. The children, in turn, maintained that they had a right to organize their own social lives. Group dynamics techniques proved to be unsuccessful in overcoming this difference.

To the investigators, it became increasingly clear that the strains and tensions expressed by Crestwood Heights' children, who were the pride of the community (according to their parents), were related to the fact that they were being forced into a position of having to reconcile the contradictory values of their upwardly mobile and financially successful upper-middle class parents: (a) They expressed both a desire for the freedom and insouciance of early childhood and a drive towards achievement, responsibility, and independence; (b) they exhibited an appreciation for the arts and humanitarian efforts as well as the motivation to achieve material success and high social status; and (c) they adhered to the conflicting values of co-operation and competition. Not surprisingly, these competing imperatives could not be attained simultaneously, and intrapsychic conflict was an inevitable result. Since these children were expected to resolve the tensions

which inescapably resulted from their parents' lifestyles, they faced demands which could be overcome only with great difficulty, if at all.

Towards the end of the project, the investigators became rather critical of the neighbourhood they investigated, which was, in their eyes, characterized by affluence, conspicuous consumption, materialism, an exaggerated status-consciousness, superficiality, and careerism. A move to the neighbourhood generally marked the above-average success of the father's professional career, at which time ethnic and familial ties effectively were relinquished. As a consequence, inhabitants of the neighbourhood welcomed mental health professionals, and viewed them as the priests of modernity. They looked to these professionals to help them face marital, family, and child-rearing problems, or to quell the perennial anxieties experienced by upwardly mobile professionals continuously struggling with the process of inventing and protecting the lifestyle and status they had so recently acquired. The voracious consumption of mental health advice in this community did not solve these underlying anxieties; it was only symptomatic of them. Sociologist John R. Seeley, the lead investigator of the project, drew a number of disturbing conclusions from these findings. He came to criticize the provision of mental health advice because it was geared exclusively towards the upwardly mobile middle classes, thereby supporting class-specific values (Seeley, 1953). Following the now well-known critique formulated by David Riesman (1950) in *The Lonely Crowd*, the investigators presented a rather damning diagnosis of the problematic middle classes. Riesman agreed with these authors and wrote the preface to their study.

Not surprisingly, the results of the Crestwood Heights Project did not quite meet earlier high expectations. The investigators found no indication that mental health education had been effective in the prevention of mental illness and psychological problems, nor had it fostered mental health. Indeed, they realized that their activities had not only been futile in alleviating the tensions and anxieties of the community, they also had helped to reinforce them. Moreover, they recognized that, as investigators and mental health professionals, they also were members of the middle class. Thus, they realized that they could not maintain a neutral stance towards or an identity separate from the community they were studying; in addressing the tensions and strains in a middle class community, they inadvertently were addressing their own as well. Seeley terminated the study, underwent psychoanalysis, and spent the rest of his professional career contemplating the issues raised in *Crestwood Heights*. In later essays, he expressed potent reservations about the consequences of the psychologization of North American society and the role mental health professionals played in it (Seeley, 1967). The Crestwood Heights Project may have been interesting had diverse communities been studied, because they would have displayed different mental health needs. In addition, a different dynamic might have developed between the community and the investigators which most likely would have led to very different results. Other researchers, for example, have extensively studied the consequences of poverty on mental health (Greenblatt, Emery, & Glueck, 1967).

Line, in the meantime, continued his mental health activities. He became involved in the organization of the World Federation for Mental Health, whose purpose he felt was to provide a forum where more and more citizens worldwide could be engaged in active discussion of mental health principles as they applied to

everyday living in their communities. In the 1950s, Line (1951b, 1958) increasingly criticized existing psychological research methods and theories for omitting the individual as an active agent in society. In addition, he felt that psychological theories did not adequately express the mutuality inherent in human relationships, but that they analyzed them instead from perspectives which emphasized submission, dominance, social control, or manipulation. Similarly, Line pointed out that psychologists established a cycle of dependency by studying research participants' reactions to stimuli which *they* create, and by primarily relating to the response of individuals to *their* advice. In the approach which Line came to advocate, psychologists balanced their theories of human nature with a genuine consideration of the perspective of individuals, and contrasted the self-understanding of individuals with professional views. He postulated that the individual's sense of self-understanding undoubtedly had been shaped by prevailing social values, in which case psychological theories could provide a corrective call for action.

The practice of psychological research within the educational system and the community initiated by Bott and continued by Blatz and Line sharply decreased in significance during the 1950s. In 1956, following Bott's retirement, the Department of Psychology adopted an experimental, laboratory-based approach. Immediately after the war, a number of influential academic psychologists decried the lack of fundamental research being conducted in Canadian universities. At the same time, funding for psychological research increased exponentially and the number of graduate programs more than doubled (Wright, 1969). In 1955, a critical report appeared on the state of Canadian psychology, charging that it had been prematurely professionalized and had failed to explore its scientific roots (MacLeod, 1955). In an attempt to replicate the most prestigious experimental programs in American universities, Canadian psychologists turned their attention towards basic research, and interest in practical application declined. Myers (1970) concluded that this situation had been exacerbated by the inefficient funding of training programs in clinical psychology because these were organized by the provinces and not the federal government. While most Canadian psychologists were engaged in laboratory research, a small group of community psychologists still continued their work (Davidson, 1981; Walsh, 1988; Walsh-Bowers, 1998).

CONCLUSION

Community psychology has a long tradition in Canada, starting with the activities of Clarke and Hincks in the 1910s and continuing with the initiatives of Bott, Blatz, and Line in Toronto. The psychologists at the University of Toronto investigated child development in educational settings. Initially, their research focused on the adjustment of school children, which was defined as conformity to the institutional expectations of the school. Later, they established developmental norms which could be used to detect early maladjustment and guide preventive intervention. Such research could be useful for those in charge of growing children, among them parents and teachers. Just before World War II, they implemented human relations classes to improve the coping skills of school children by stimulating them to engage in free discussion on topics of their own choice.

After World War II, the Toronto group expressed fundamental misgivings towards their past activities. First, they claimed that mental health intervention had been disproportionately geared towards adjusting individuals to existing social conditions, rendering them docile, rather than empowering them to improve their own circumstances; second, they felt that the mental health advice offered had been class-specific and represented an expression of an exclusively upper-middle class value structure. They developed practices and tools to overcome these shortcomings, most importantly the group dynamics techniques applied in human relations classes. These techniques also were used to conduct ethnographic research, which led to a sophisticated view of mental health as depending on personal, familial, and social factors. They also compelled mental health professionals to listen to the voices of the individuals they aimed to assist and, at times, to stimulate them to undertake action to change their own living environment.

Up until the early 1950s, an interest in and extensive contact with the community fit the disciplinary project of Canadian psychology. When Canadian psychologists came to emphasize laboratory experimentation, contacts within the psychological research community became a predominant concern. This shift in interest, research methods, and social orientation within Canadian psychology reflects deeper ambiguities and tensions which are inherent in all psychological research. Should psychologists emphasize research and experimentation to produce valid knowledge or should they maintain direct contacts with the community and attempt to improve existing social practices? Is there a way in which both imperatives can be satisfied? Following Bott's sensitivity with respect to the consequences of the social organization of psychology for its practice, psychologists could benefit from an awareness of these conditions, question whether they contribute to the type of social practice they wish to further, and reflect on the relationship between psychology and society as well as between psychologists and individuals.

RÉSUMÉ

Au 20^e siècle, les psychologues au Canada se sont impliqués à plusieurs occasions dans le système éducatif, la vie associative et diverses fonctions sociales. Cet article se penche sur la psychologie du développement humain, telle qu'elle a été élaborée à l'Institut de psychologie de l'Université de Toronto de 1916 à 1956. Nombre de projets se consacraient à étudier la santé mentale des enfants dans le cadre scolaire tandis que des mesures étaient conçues et testées pour prévenir les problèmes d'adaptation et favoriser leur santé mentale. Au début, la recherche et les interventions cherchaient surtout à adapter les écoliers et écolères au cadre scolaire. Depuis, on assiste à l'émergence d'un regard critique sur les institutions sociales et la société canadienne.

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