

## COMMENT ON CANADA'S MENTAL HEALTH TRENDS: PRESCRIPTION FOR PSYCHOLOGY

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The article by John and Vivian Renner (*Interamerican Journal of Psychology*, 1972, 6, 1-2), "Canada's Mental Health Trends: Prescription for Psychology," is an extremely interesting one and generally very perceptive. However, there are some errors of fact therein.

The statement is made that "In Canada, there is no university which grants a Ph.D. in either industrial or community psychology." This is not quite true. The department of which I am head has programs at both the M.Sc. and Ph.D. levels in School and Community Psychology. These programs involve practicums in a variety of settings — e.g. Vocational and Rehabilitation Research Institute (developmentally handicapped), Providence Child Development Centre (developmentally handicapped), Woods Christian Home (emotionally disturbed children), Psychiatric Section of the Holy Cross Hospital (psychiatric patients — including a Day Centre), The Calgary Public School Board, Division of Special Educational Services (school problems) and The Psychoeducational Clinic of The University of Calgary (educational and behavioral problems of children).

The statement "Furthermore, in many universities, graduate work in educational psychology and counseling is offered by education rather than psychology departments" has a pejorative ring to it. At The University of Calgary there are two psychology departments; one, in The Faculty of Arts and Science, emphasizes experimental psychology, the other, in The Faculty of Education, emphasizes applied psychology. This does not mean that the standards in the latter are somehow lower. On the contrary, some idea of the standards may be gained from the fact that there are four Fellows and four Associates of The British Psychological Society in the Department of Educational Psychology. Most of the faculty are full members of the American Psychological Association and most are trained primarily in psychology rather than education.

Further on in the article the Renners claim (about psychologists in hospitals) "They know little about computers, the various multiple correlation techniques, or how to design a survey, or, in general, how to con-

duct applied field research." This can hardly be said about the graduates from this department when they have had instruction from men like Philip Vernon, Herbert Hallworth and Walter Zwirner who are among the most eminent in these fields in Canada.

The article has the all too common features of work written in the East of Canada, i.e., a great lack of information about what is going on in Western Canada. I may be perhaps forgiven for being proud of a department which has the largest graduate program (20 doctoral and 100+ master's students) in the University of Calgary (circa 9000 students). I feel strongly that research into the Mental Health field should extend further west than Ontario.

Most of the rest of the article I agree with, particularly their strictures concerning psychiatric research and the fuddy-duddy attitude of the Canadian Psychological Association with regard to applied psychology, i.e., splitting off the applied people into a separate division where they can be isolated from the main stream and control of the organization proper.

I hope that you will publish this letter to correct an otherwise very useful article.