

A TALE OF CANTERBURY CLINICIANS*

W. A. M. Black

During the 1960-72 period 56 students were accepted for training in clinical psychology at the University of Canterbury. Information is given of their whereabouts and the question of research training is raised.

Opportunities for postgraduate training in clinical psychology are now at a point of major expansion with all universities offering or planning courses. This contrasts with a state of affairs which existed for a decade in which the only postgraduate training course available was offered by the Psychology Department of the University of Canterbury in conjunction with the New Zealand Department of Health.

In 1960, following the introduction of an M.A. in clinical psychology, the University of Canterbury was approached by the Department of Health with a request that postgraduate training to the level of a Diploma in Clinical Psychology be developed. By 1962, after consultation with the Standing Sub-committee of the E.D.P.P. of the British Psychological Society, a Certificate and Diploma course began, the basic pre-requisite for which was a bachelor's degree in psychology from a New Zealand university or an equivalent qualification. After two years a student could emerge with a master's degree in which the clinical options had been taken, and a certificate when further practical work had been completed. Both were requirements for the Diploma which could be obtained after passing an oral and practical examination at the end of a following year's internship. There was a change in regulations in 1968 to enable selected students taking Part III of a B.Sc. (Hons) degree to enter the course with a view to their proceeding to a Ph.D. in clinical psychology.

The Canterbury course has attracted varied comment (Shouksmith, 1960; Valett, 1962; Bourne, 1964; Hearnshaw, 1965; Parsonson, 1968; Unger, 1969; Samuel, 1970); which has resulted in applications from Australia, Canada, Chile, Singapore and Thailand and enquiries from America, Britain and Fiji. However, none of the comment to date has centered on what is the key issue in assessing the product of any university professional course, namely how well does it fare on the world and domestic markets?

*Based on a paper presented at the second New Zealand Division of Mental Health Conference of Clinical Psychologists, Templeton Hospital, 3-4 October, 1972.

Of the seven employed overseas at the end of the 1972/73 academic year, three have master's degrees from Canterbury and four have Diplomas as well; in addition two have obtained Ph.Ds at other Commonwealth universities. In Canada one made history in a quiet but important way by being the first non-psychiatrist to fill a post of executive director in a mental hospital and in Australia another is participating in the development of a new post-graduate training programme for clinical psychologists. Another who returned to New Zealand recently, worked as a senior clinical psychologist in both Scotland and England during a two year period. Of the forty-six members of the course who are currently in New Zealand eleven have diplomas, of whom three are involved in the training of clinical psychologists and a fourth with the training of educational psychologists.

Overall the wastage from the practice and teaching of psychology is small, as may be seen from Table 1, particularly if allied professions such as school teaching and medicine are included.

TABLE 1
THE WHEREABOUTS OF ENTRANTS TO THE CANTERBURY
CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY PROGRAMME 1960-72

Country	No.	Position
Australia	2	Senior Clinical Psychologist in the penal field.
	1	Senior Clinical Psychologist.
	1	Lecturer in Psychology.
	1	Untraced.
Canada	1	Executive Director of a mental hospital.
	1	Clinical Psychologist.
	1	Assistant Professor of Psychology.
New Zealand	1	Regional Senior Psychologist in the penal field.
	1	Senior Clinical Psychologist.
	6	Clinical Psychologists.
	8	Assistant Clinical Psychologists.
	1	Assistant Psychologists in the penal field.
	1	Psychologist in the Air Force.
	2	Clinical Psychologists in private practice.
	1	Clinical Psychologist working part-time.
	1	Research Officer in the penal field.
	3	Senior Lecturers in Psychology.
	1	Lecturer in Psychology.
	1	Lecturer in Education.
	1	Student Counsellor.
	7	Ph.D. students.
	7	Masters students with theses to complete.
1	Headmaster of a Primary School.	
1	Student teacher.	
1	Medical student.	
1	Mother with a young family.	
Other	2	On overseas trips.

However, the gain to the profession of clinical psychology has not been as great as one might have hoped, for in Australia, Canada and New Zealand combined, the total working full-time as clinical psychologists is twenty-five. However, this state of affairs is not confined to Canterbury graduates. For instance, Drewe (1971) discussing the fate of Maudsley psychologists reports "that 40% are in fact full-time clinical psychologists, with half as many again practising part-time."

The reasons for the job movements of clinical psychologists are discussed by for instance Parsonson (1968), Kear-Colwell (1972), and Graham White (1972).

A major problem from the point of view of training clinical psychologists is how best to encourage them to finish their qualifications and in particular to meet the thesis requirement of their master's degree, for it is important that they carry through a research study of their own. Not only is the poverty of our present knowledge such that even modest contributions are welcome but there should be at least one group of mental health professionals trained to regard research as a basic part of their own practice.

Completion of a research study is part of such a training but once again difficulties with a thesis are not confined to Canterbury clinicians; for instance, Peterson (1971) discussing a new doctoral programme for clinical psychologists writes:

"It seems to me that imposing a thesis demand only upon people who want to do research has eliminated a good deal of the pain on the part of students and faculty alike. We no longer have to go through the excruciation of supervising quite so many studies contrived for no reason but to satisfy an academic demand."

However, the ability to carry out research is an important skill which should be in the repertoire of all clinicians; the point to be resolved is the best way of training them to acquire it.

A contributing factor may be that it has been possible to gain satisfactory employment in New Zealand without having to complete a master's degree and once immersed in a practical setting it is difficult to set time aside to meet the demands of a thesis. Even when these have been met it has been possible on the strength of a master's degree to obtain employment overseas and to rise to a senior position without having completed the requirements for a certificate, let alone the Diploma. However, there are indications of a change as the total of those who have obtained Diplomas increased by 50% in 1972, from ten to fifteen.

To conclude: Gardner (1973) writes that "The commonest test of a university's work is the number and quality of the graduates which it turns out."

The number of Canterbury clinicians is not great but their quality may be seen by the positions they have obtained both in New Zealand and overseas.

REFERENCES

- Bourne, H. (1964) "New Zealand". In H. P. David (Ed.) *International resources in clinical psychology*. New York, McGraw-Hill. 134-135. Reprinted in B. B. Wolman (Ed.) *Handbook of clinical psychology*. New York, McGraw Hill, 1965, 1499-1500.
- Drewe, E. A. (1971) The fate of Maudsley psychologists. *Bull. Br. Psychol. Soc.* 24, 201-205.
- Gardner, W. J., Beardsley, E. T. and Carter, T. E. (1973). *A history of the University of Canterbury 1873-1973*. Christchurch: University of Canterbury.
- Graham White, J. (1972) What is wrong with clinical psychology? *Bull. Br. psychol. Soc.*, 25, 101-106.
- Hearnshaw, L. S. (1965) Psychology in New Zealand—a report. *Bull. Br. Psychol. Soc.*, 18, 17-24.
- Kear-Colwell, J. J. (1972) A study of clinical psychologists' job movements during the period 1.10.67 to 30.9.70. *Bull. Br. psychol. Soc.*, 25, 25-27.
- Parsonson, B. S. (1968) Going, going, gone!—Clinical psychologists who were in the Division of Mental Health 1958-1968. Unpublished typescript.
- Peterson, D. R. (1971) Status of the Doctor of Psychology program, 1970. *Prof. Psychol.*, 2, 271-275.
- Samuel, J. G. (1970). Training clinical psychologists. A paper presented at the first New Zealand Division of Mental Health Conference of Clinical Psychologists. Templeton Hospital, 12-13 November, 1970.
- Shouksmith, G. A. (1969) Developing clinical psychology in New Zealand. *Ment. Hosps.*, 11, (9), 41-42.
- Unger, H. R. (1969) Within the whirlpool—aspects of the establishment of clinical psychology. *International Mental Health Newsletter*, 11, (3), 1 and 4-7.
- Valett, R. E. (1962) Psychological training in hypnosis in New Zealand. *Int. J. clin. exp. Hypnosis*, 10, 119-121.