

# The Department of Psychology at Hunter

Virginia Staudt Sexton '36 • Catherine F. Reid

Within the last two decades psychology has progressed rapidly as a science and as a profession. Recent extensive investigations have yielded a vast body of knowledge and theory in all branches of psychology including educational, developmental, clinical, social, industrial, and physiological. New areas, such as engineering psychology, have emerged. Applications of psychology have been extended to various aspects of community life in the interests of human welfare. The consequent unprecedented demand for psychological services in contemporary society has accelerated the growth of psychology as a profession. Increased numbers of students, attracted by the expanded vocational opportunities in the profession, have made imperative the revision and expansion of psychology curricula and training facilities throughout the United States.

Naturally the impact of these developments has effected changes in the structure and program of Hunter's Psychology Department. Originally organized as a joint department with philosophy about 1940, the Psychology Department was formally established as a separate entity in 1961. During the last decade laboratory facilities have been expanded and course offerings have been revised. In 1959, the undergraduate laboratory at Park Avenue was extensively remodeled and modernized. On the Bronx Campus, in Davis Hall, a small laboratory was organized in 1956. In 1959, upon the opening of Shuster Hall, the Psychology Department moved to larger quarters there, but even these are now barely adequate for faculty and student research needs. For both divisions the Department has continued to acquire new and improved laboratory apparatus with annual purchases coordinated to new developments in experimental psychology. A recent National Science Foundation grant made possible the acquisition of additional equipment.

The Department offers a basic core of courses for the Psychology major, which includes Experimental Psychology, a laboratory course, and Psychological Statistics. Each student in the laboratory course is required to do a research study. Superior students who qualify for Honors in Psychology are permitted to pursue further independent research under a departmental

adviser. The findings of such research are ultimately presented at a departmental seminar. In addition to the basic core, the student can select from a wide variety of courses, including Social Psychology, Applications of Psychology, History of Psychology, Psychological Testing, Motivation, Personality, Abnormal Psychology, Child Psychology, Physiological Psychology, Psychology of the Exceptional Child and Learning Theory. These courses are also open to qualified non-majors, many of whom are drawn from other behavioral sciences and from education.

About twenty per cent of the Psychology majors go on to graduate work in psychology, a considerable number as recipients of scholarships, assistantships, or fellowships. Among the many institutions from which Hunter graduates have obtained their master's and doctoral degrees in psychology are Columbia, Harvard, Yale, University of Pennsylvania, Cornell, New York University, Fordham, Stanford, Pennsylvania State, and University of Minnesota.

Over the years, the Department has offered graduate courses such as Adolescent Psychology and Abnormal Psychology as part of the Teacher Education Program. At the creation of the City University in 1961, the Psychology Department initiated a Master of Arts degree program designed for students selecting either a general theory or pre-clinical orientation. All students in the program are required to complete a basic core of courses including Advanced Experimental Psychology, Advanced Physiological Psychology, Research Design, Personality, History of Psychology, and the Thesis Research Seminar. In addition, they must pass language and comprehensive examinations, and write a thesis based on an original research project. Since graduate instruction is offered exclusively at the Park Avenue Division, a new laboratory for graduate research had to be opened there in 1962. As of September 1963, fifteen students have entered the program, and two have completed their master's work. The Department's graduate courses are also open to qualified students enrolled in Nursing, Social Service, Education, and similar programs.

At both Park Avenue and Bronx divisions, the Psy-



Department of Psychology, left to right. Sitting: Professor Harrison, Pearl Lurie, Department Secretary, Mrs. Hayes, Professor Welch, Professor Barrett, Professor Knehr; standing: Professor Korn, Professor Sexton, Dr. Haber, Professor Stuart, Professor Reid, Professor Tyson, Professor Flock, Professor Weiss.

chology Club and Psi Chi, the psychology honor society, sponsor valuable educational programs throughout the year. These include addresses by prominent specialists in different fields of psychology and field trips to various types of mental institutions. In addition, each semester the Department arranges with Bellevue Psychiatric Hospital for Hunter students to attend a special clinic demonstration of various types of mental disorder. These co-curricular activities are designed to bring the student into vital contact with the practical applications of psychology in the community.

Another enterprise cultivated under the aegis of the Psychology Department is the Institute for Research in Clinical and Child Psychology. In 1941 Professor Welch founded the Institute, and he has continued to serve as its Director since that time. Both psychiatrists and psychologists, including many members of the Hunter Department, have been elected to membership in this group. Over the years, the Advisory and Research membership rosters of the Institute have included some of the nation's most distinguished psychiatrists

and psychologists. At the Institute's annual meetings, theoretical and research papers are presented by members and invited scientists. At many of these meetings, too, the Department's superior students who have served as research assistants (familiarily called "The Marines") at the Payne Whitney Clinic have contributed research papers, an experience which has proved invaluable for them.

Under the direction of Professor Welch and through the dedicated efforts of staff and committees, the Department has met the burgeoning demands of the "Age of Psychology." Expansion of course offerings and vocational advisory services, constant upgrading of laboratory equipment and library facilities, inter-disciplinary programming, planning co-curricular activities, and graduate preparation—these have been the concerns of the Psychology Department. Within Hunter College we are engaged by a fast moving and multifarious life. We are committed to improving ourselves and our educational services to meet the challenges of our universe.

*Professor Livingston Welch* (Ph.D., Columbia University), Chairman of the Department of Psychology, is a full professor at Hunter College and an Associate Professor of Psychology at Cornell Medical College since 1952, and is also on the staff of the Payne Whitney Clinic.

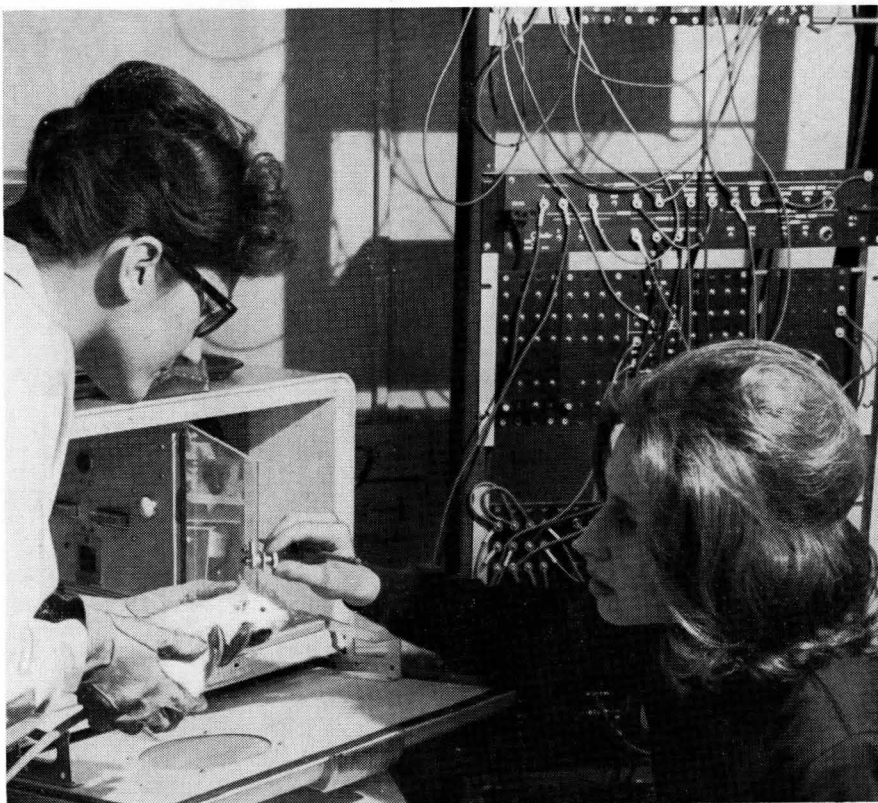
Professor Welch has published over seventy monographs and articles on child psychology, hypnosis, concept formation, and anxiety. His book, *Imagination and Human Behavior*, was published in England in 1935. He has also written over two hundred reviews for psychological journals, the *New York Times*, *Herald Tribune*, *Nation*, *New York Post*, and the *New Republic*.

*Professor Dorothy M. Barrett's* (Ph.D., Columbia University) professional interests are dedicated to teaching. Her special area includes advanced courses in Motivation and Personality. Professor Barrett has received the Diplomate in Counseling from the American Board of Examiners in Professional Psychology. She is a Fellow in the Division of Counseling, American Psychological Association.

*Professor Robert Berryman's* (Ph.D., New York University) research is in the use of operant conditioning techniques in the analysis of complex discriminations, such as matching-to-sample. While most previous work has been done with animal subjects, research in young children is now in progress. This work is supported by a City University of New York grant. Professor Berryman has also received a grant from the National Science Foundation for the purchase of undergraduate instructional equipment.

*Mrs. Arline Bronzafit '56* (M.A., Columbia University) is working in educational research, the study of the galvanic skin response, and test anxiety and achievement. She is a staff member of Cornell University Medical College.

*Professor Vincent R. Fisichelli* (Ph.D., Fordham University) is Department Representative for Psychology on the Bronx Campus. Under a National Institute of Health grant, he is co-investigator in a study of the diagnostic potential of the cry of the newborn infant, with principal experimentation being done at the Long Island Jewish Hospital. The basic premise of this research concerns the relation between objective characteristics of the cry and the condition of the infant's central nervous system. The specific technique being used involves recording and analysis of various infant cries as they relate to the effects of such conditions as brain



*Studying learning patterns of white rats*

damage, and of such special diseases as Mongolism and Tay-Sachs.

*Professor Howard R. Flock* (Ph.D., Cornell University) is concentrating his current research in visual space perception and the complex of problems relating to that area. His experimental program is being conducted in the Psychology Laboratory, Shuster Hall, with support from the National Institute of Health. The immediate importance of this research is seen in its vital relevance to the development of simulators for training military pilots, and to the design of mechanisms for interplanetary exploration in manned space ships.

*Dr. Leonard Haber* (Ph.D., Adelphi University) is presently pursuing two principal lines of research: 1) the status of psychiatry relative to other medical specialties, and the causative attitudes of general status ratings; 2) the relationship between altered language styles and ongoing social conditions. Dr. Haber is Editor of the *Newsletter* of the Division of Clinical Psychology, American Psychological Association, and a member of the Corresponding Committee of Fifty of this division. He is also a member of the Legal and Legislative Committee, New York State Psychological Association.

*Professor Ross Harrison's* (Ph.D., Johns Hopkins University) professional interests lie in the personality, clinical, and industrial fields of psychology, especially personnel assessment. He is a specialist in projective techniques. He has published an historical study on Functionalism in the Genetic Psychology Monograph series, and has contributed a chapter on Thematic Apperceptive Methods in the forthcoming *Handbook of Clinical Psychology*. He is a Fellow of the Divisions of General and Industrial Psychology in the American Psychological Association.

*Mrs. Roslyn F. Hayes '56* (M.A., Columbia University) has particular research interests in the construction of attitude scales, parametric measures of autonomic activity (especially the psychogalvanic response), statistics, and educational research. She is a staff member of Cornell University Medical College.

*Professor Charles A. Knehr* (Ph.D., Columbia University) continues his research in the areas of intelligence, perception, and thinking, with special reference to their neurological correlates. For some years Professor Knehr has studied and reported on thinking impairment in psychopathological and organic conditions in

adults. Based on these findings, his present research is directed toward the preparation of similar studies of emotionally disturbed and brain damaged children. Professor Knehr is a Fellow, Divisions of Experimental Psychology and Teaching Psychology, American Psychological Association.

*Professor Sam J. Korn* (Ph.D., New York University) is investigating Conditioned Stimulus Response adaptation and the orienting response as a Research Associate at Cornell University Medical College. His summers are spent as Senior Research Psychologist on the New York Longitudinal Project studying the developmental course of primary reaction patterns in infancy and childhood. He is a volunteer Consulting Psychologist in a Brooklyn community nursery school.

*Professor Catherine F. Reid's* (Ph.D., Fordham University) professional interest is teaching, especially several advanced courses including Child Psychology, Psychology of Exceptional Children and Youth, and Psychology of Learning. She has written four articles on Sensation, Emotion and Imagination for the *Catholic Youth Encyclopedia* to be published this year. Her current research is in assessment of student attitudes about science.

*Professor Virginia Staudt Sexton's* ('36; Ph.D., Fordham University) current projects include: research at the New York Psychiatric Institute on "An evaluation of Chemotherapy in the treatment of schizophrenia"; an undergraduate text on the history of psychology; and a group of articles on psychology for the revised *Catholic Encyclopedia*. Professor Sexton is vice-chairman of the Section on Psychology, New York Academy of Sciences, an abstractor for *Psychological Abstracts*, and president-elect, American Catholic Psychological Association. She is a Fellow of the Teaching and Philosophical Divisions of the American Psychological Association; of the American Association for the Advancement of Science; and of the International Council of Psychology.

*Professor Mary Rose Sheehan '25* (Ph.D., Columbia University) while pursuing her teaching interests in the fields of General, Social, and Applied Psychology, and of Personality, has given unsparingly of her energies to demanding committee work. She served as a member of the Long Range Curriculum Planning Committee, and the Course of Study Committee for the Revision of the Curriculum, and was Chairman of the Psychology Department Change of Courses Committee.



*Professor Knehr and senior Robert J. Lorenz experimenting with "subjective color"*

Professor Sheehan's revision of Robert Woodworth's classic text, *Contemporary Schools of Psychology*, is in press for Spring publication. She had earlier collaborated with Professor Woodworth on a psychology text for senior high schools and junior colleges.

*Professor Irving R. Stuart* (Ph.D., New York University) is doing research on the relation between personality structure and its reflection in the plastic arts. Under a grant from the American Academy of Arts and Sciences he is researching for a book on psychodynamics in political art. His recently completed investigation of the interrelations of genetic makeup of personality structures and reactions to visual arts is being reported. Professor Stuart also has in progress a study of the perceptual characteristics of fraternal and identical twins.

*Professor Robert Tyson* (Ph.D., University of Vienna) is investigating the use of literature as an adjunct in the treatment of psychosomatic problems. This project is being conducted with medical and psychological collaboration, for the purpose of supplying the patient or client with helpful information and suggestions which the physician cannot usually supply in the time ordinarily available. Professor Tyson, in addition to his research and writing, is an abstractor for *Psychological Abstracts*. He is a Fellow in the Divisions of Teaching and Counseling, American Psychological Association.

*Professor Walter Weiss* (Ph.D., Yale University) is working on analyses of several studies of the role of the communicator in persuasion. He is also preparing articles on research dealing with the phenomena of judgment, particularly the perception of another's position on an issue, and with people's reaction to incidents comprising consistent or inconsistent elements. Professor Weiss' continuing research along these lines of investigation will be supported in part by a contract with the Office of Naval Research, Group Psychology Branch. His co-authored commissioned monograph on principles of attitude change will be completed this year. He has agreed to serve as a member of the editorial board of the newly organized *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*.

*Dr. Benjamin B. Wolman* (Ph.D., University of Warsaw) is doing research on socio-psychological determinants of personality development, and is associate editor of the psychoanalytic journal, *American Imago*. His *Contemporary Theories and Systems in Psychology* is now in its third printing. Also his *Handbook of Clinical Psychology*, and the monograph *Vectoriasis Praecox, or The Group of Schizophrenias*, and a number of articles for psychiatric and psychological journals are in press. Dr. Wolman is a Fellow of the Philosophical, Personality and Social, and Clinical Divisions of the American Psychological Association.