

THE TRAGEDY OF EXAM MONTH

by Lawrence Collins
(Staff Reporter, Toronto
Telegram)

During exam time, Canadian university students will suffer emotional upsets ranging from the jitters to nervous breakdowns.

Some may try to commit suicide — no one will know how many because the incidents will be hushed up.

But examinations, with their accompanying pressures only highlight a year-round problem that is worrying Canadian university leaders more and more — the problem of students who are emotionally disturbed.

These unhappy youngsters may be so tense they suffer chest and abdominal pains. They can't concentrate or they can't sleep. All fail to perform up to their intelligence level.

"It's a tremendous wastage of human ability," says David Sutherland, warden of Ryerson Institute's Kerr Hall, where the student body is small enough for staff to be aware of student problems.

Unheard of 40 years ago, the problem of student mental health now is of general concern.

"I know several university presidents who are worrying about it," says Dr. J. A. Corry, principal of Queen's University in Kingston.

Some of the worried officials looked for answers at a conference on student mental health at Queen's.

It was sponsored by the Canadian Mental Health Association, the National Federation of Canadian University Students, and the World University Service of Canada.

One answer may be a broader psychological counseling service. Most universities provide some counseling, but few are satisfied with their efforts.

"Hardly a university in Canada has any real counseling," says R. J. Taber of the Ryerson social science department. Statistics in England show 25 out of 100 students suffer emotional or mental upsets before graduation, one or two of them winding up in the hospital.

Yet, many badly disturbed students never seek help. Diane Bushell, University of Toronto nursing student who gathered information of mental health for a seminar, says there is enough talk on campus to confirm that suicide attempts sometimes occur. But they seldom come to official attention.

Are today's students more mentally unstable than yesterday's, and if so, why? "Some say it's a softening of the fibre," Dr. Corry says. "I don't believe that at all."

"There has been a change in the structure of society. We've loosened the family and community bonds. A young fellow doesn't feel he fits as securely as he used to fit."

Miss Bushell says university students are in a frustrating stage of life, still dependent on parents but seeking independence.

"They can't plan beyond the next examination. They have vocational problems and personal problems. They are at an age when they are looking for a permanent mate, yet they know that means giving up some freedom. Others have sexual problems because they are in no position to marry."

Some say the pressure on a student to get through university is much greater than it used to be because a degree is considered essential to success.

Students, many of them anti-nuclear demonstrators, are also sincerely worried about The Bomb.

Others are dogged by unfortunate home backgrounds, or upset by the strangeness of the university environment. But they are ashamed to seek help or do not know where to go for it.

"In Canada there hasn't been a tradition of looking after the non-academic problems," says Mr. Sutherland.

University educators hope developments in this line will continue at a rapid rate.



"A Bright and Shiny Thing"

When a little boy sees a bright and shiny thing, he picks it up and puts it in his pocket to keep. The object appeals to him, not because of any tangible value, but because the object is pleasing in itself. Too many people lose the ability to find bright and shiny things . . . intangibles with no other purpose than to make the possessor feel better . . . as they undergo the process of growing up.

It is a common usage in this land to give Christmas gifts . . . or perhaps I should say mis-usage, since most of the "gifts" are on an exchange basis . . . calculated value-for-value. I know of two people who agreed one year to exchange gifts of approximately the same value. They ended up sending each other a five dollar bill in a Christmas card. Neither the giver nor the donee received very much intrinsic satisfaction, nor was either moved very much by the spirit of the season.

How much better it is to receive an unsolicited, unexpected gift. It does not matter whether it has any material value . . . in fact, the best gifts . . . both to give and receive . . . are those to which no value can be fixed. Better one bright and shiny thing than a thousand gift certificates.

The most appreciated gift I ever received was the simple touch of a hand on my shoulder . . . when I badly needed to know that there was still compassion and be reassured that I was not alone. A kind word, an understanding act, an unasked-for favour . . . these are the bright and shiny things which constitute really valuable gifts. And the gifts do as much or more for the giver as they do for those who receive them. Although there is undoubtedly a great deal of sentimentality involved, one never knows until one tries it just how magnificent an obsession Lloyd C. Douglas was describing.

And so to the Christmas season . . . the hush of the church on Christmas . . . a warm smile from a seldom-seen friend . . . sitting in front of the fireplace . . . the smell of fir and pine . . . the frantic nostalgia and optimism of New Year's . . . kissing everyone . . . not getting up in the mornings . . . houses with children in them . . . the clean, honest smell of your mother's cooking . . . these are the bright and shiny things of Christmas. To those who don't have these things I can't give them . . . but perhaps I can give you a bright and shiny thing of your own.

To each in his own fashion, I wish a pleasant holiday . . . and a meaningful appreciation that there is goodness and faith in all men . . . and that good will to all sometimes comes from surprising places. As Tiny Tim said . . . "God bless us every one."



Three professors of History at UNB who were present at the first 'international telephone lecture', from left, Prof. R. Wilbur, Prof. D. S. Graham, and Prof. C. M. Greene, commented on this innovation in education. Professor Greene said the technique "provides a useful function if we can't get a lecturer here, but is not very useful as a permanent device." Mr. Graham said he felt that it could increase "cooperation between people on and off the campus" and he thought that it would be useful to "tape record lecturers from overseas to exchange with other universities." Mr. Wilbur said, "This lecture provided us with good ideas for our own lectures, such as the use of tape recordings and so on, which can widen the horizons for the lecturer and the student." (Story on Page 3).

LETTERS (from page 4)

but to me, the buildings of U.N.B. are fantastic just the way they are. The auditoriums have adequate lighting, large blackboards and comfortable seats. Unlike McGill, the rows are of different heights enabling the whole class to see the professor as well as hear him. The auditoriums couldn't be more practical.

The main reason that I am writing this letter is to contradict the writers' ideas on Lady Dunn Hall. There is nothing more assuring than to walk into Lady Dunn and be greeted by Mr. Bateman, the Commissioner, or to know that

you are perfectly safe because of the Burglar Alarm system when an intoxicated male comes banging at the door. I happen to love Lady Dunn the way it is. You may think that I am a starry-eyed freshman, but I have yet to get a happier feeling than walking up the path to Lady Dunn at 1:30 a.m. seeing the lights shining on the gold letters on the white balcony; or to lean against the "fortress" wall, the highest point "Up the Hill" and look down on the lighted buildings and residences on our beautiful campus.

Yours truly,
A lover of U.N.B.

Robarts pans free education

HAMILTON (CUP) — Ontario Premier John Robarts suggested last week that any campaign to launch free education in Canada will probably prove unfruitful.

He told a student audience at McMaster University that Canada already has a broad system of bursaries, scholarships and loans, and, in his opinion, is unlikely to adopt free education in the foreseeable future.

The Premier also said he foresaw no change in his government's policy of not granting funds for the building of university residences.

"It is the easiest thing in the world for the government to pay for everything," he said. "But, if the entire financial burden of education falls on the government, then the government is going to have to control education."

Mr. Robarts attended a formal reception of the McMaster Students' Council before addressing an open meeting of the McMaster Progressive Conservative Club.

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If you plan to journey to Europe this summer and would like to fly — a special charter flight is being planned by your CUS Committee. The cost would be between \$185 and \$250 return, depending on the number of interested students. All students must travel on the same flights — i.e., leave on May 20, 1965 and return on Aug. 20, 1965.

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For more information contact:
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BOB ORR, Bridges House