



## **A History of the Department of Psychology**

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The University of Buffalo was established in 1846, primarily as a medical school, in buildings in downtown Buffalo, NY. The University's liberal arts curriculum was not introduced until 1913. The New York State Education Department authorized a College of Arts and Sciences in 1919 and within a year there were 600 students and 31 faculty. The Department of Education and Psychology was formally established in 1919, with the appointment of its first department head, Daniel Bell Leary, although a few psychology courses had been taught between 1915 and 1919. Leary gave up the leadership of the education department in 1930.

### ***Main Street Campus, 1922 – 1969***

The University of Buffalo and the Psychology Department moved to the Main Street Campus (now the South Campus) in 1922. The department was housed successfully in Hayes hall, part of the second floor of the physics building (formerly Hochstetter Hall, now Wende Hall), and then much of Crosby Hall. From 1958 to 1969, the department occupied the new Townsend Hall (the first Townsend Hall was on Niagara Square in downtown Buffalo). In addition to Townsend Hall, the department had a house on Winspear Avenue that contained offices for several of the faculty.

Daniel Bell Leary [1886 – 1946], earned his doctorate in 1919, at Teacher's College, Columbia University. While behaviorally oriented, Leary was also deeply involved with psychoanalysis. He was popular with students and was the first professor to institute outdoor classes during warm weather. Among Leary's scholarly works were "That mind of yours: A psychological analysis" (1927), "Modern psychology, normal and abnormal: A behaviorism of personality" (1928), "Educational psychology: An application of modern psychology to teaching" (1934). In addition, Leary wrote a column titled "That mind of yours" for the Buffalo Evening News.

By 1931, the department included three faculty members in addition to Leary. One of these was Edward Safford Jones [1888 – 1969], whose major area was personnel guidance and testing. Through most of the 1940's and up to his retirement in 1958, Jones was only part-time in the department, his principal job being Dean of Students and Director of Personnel Research for the university. Following Leary as head of the department was Carleton Forman Scofield [1900 – 1990]. Scofield earned his doctorate in 1928, at Yale under Raymond Dodge, a prominent experimental psychologist, and came to the University of Buffalo the same year. Scofield was head of

the psychology department from 1946 to 1954, although he took a leave of absence in 1952, to become director of the Psychological Warfare Division of the Department of the Army.

The department also included Olive Peckham Lester [1903 -1996]. Lester attended Lancaster High School, then the University of Buffalo, earning her bachelor's degree in 1924 (the first degree earned in psychology) and her master's degree in 1926. She began teaching psychology courses at the University of Buffalo in 1925. Lester earned her doctorate in 1931, working under the functionalist Harvey Carr and also with A.G. Bills at the University of Chicago, and completed a summer course with the structuralist E.B. Titchener at Cornell, "in order to become acquainted with a range of perspectives." During World War II, she conducted a program in human relations at a local aircraft plant. Lester was the author or co-author of numerous articles in, for example, the *Journal of Psychology* and the *Journal of Social Psychology*, and was elected a Fellow in the American Psychological Association. In 1952, Lester was made acting head, and, in 1956, head of the Psychology Department, serving until 1966. She was the first woman to head a department in the arts and sciences at the University of Buffalo, and one of the first women to become head of a department of psychology anywhere. Lester said in the 1980's, that she was "so very proud of being a woman chairman." She felt that she got along well with the men, in part because she was "a little bit of a tomboy"; she played golf and baseball and also ice-skated with the male faculty on a pond near the campus. She was honored with a Distinguished Alumni Award from the university in 1973.

Following the end of World War II, the department began to grow. B. Richard Bugelski [1914 -1995] earned his bachelor's degree at the University of Buffalo in 1934, and his master's degree in 1935. At Yale University, Bugelski worked with the experimental psychologist Clark L. Hull and then completed pioneering work on learning with Neal E. Miller. He earned his doctorate in 1938, under E.S. Robinson and Walter Miles. Bugelski taught briefly elsewhere and served in the Navy before joining the University of Buffalo's psychology department in 1946. Bugelski's first assignment was to teach Leary's courses, including "The psychology of learning" (1956), and "The psychology of learning applied to teaching" (1963), were translated into other languages. The "rat-man", an ambiguous stimulus figure from Bugelski's research, was widely reprinted in psychology textbooks. Bugelski served as chair of the department from 1966 to 1969, and also as president of the Eastern Psychological Association. Before he retired from the university in 1978, he was promoted to SUNY Distinguished Professor.

The department's Psychological Clinic (now the Psychological Services Center) was established in 1947, on the second floor of Crosby Hall in the Main Street Campus. Its first director was Thomas Kennelly, who also served as director of the Clinical Psychology Training Program, which received its first American Psychological Association accreditation in 1948. In 1949, Egan H. Ringwall, who received his doctorate from the University of Michigan, took over as director of the Psychological Clinic. Ringwall was elected the first president of the

Psychological Association of Western New York (PAWNY) in 1954. Marvin J. Feldman [1922 – 1973], whose doctorate was from the University of California (1949), became the next director of the Clinical Psychology Training Program following Kennelly. Feldman was elected president of PAWNY in 1958.

Marvin Feldman was also the first director of the department's Honors Program for undergraduate students. The department awards a prize at the end of spring semester to a graduating senior for distinguished honors achievement. This prize, the Feldman-Cohen Award, is given to honor the contributions of Feldman and of Walter Cohen [1922 – 1973], to the department's programs. Cohen earned his doctorate under the experimental psychologist Carl R. Brown at the University of Michigan. Cohen had one of the best ganzfeld (sensory deprivation) laboratories in the world; his work was frequently cited in textbooks on perception.

Ira. S. Cohen [1922 – 1992], joined the psychology department in 1952, served as provost of the Faculty of Social Sciences and Administration from 1968 to 1971, and then as chair of the psychology department from 1978 to 1980. Cohen became interested in psychology while at Queens College, where he earned his B.A. in 1948. He earned his doctorate in 1953 at Indiana University. Cohen's research on psychopathology included studies of language and thought processes in schizophrenia and psychosomatic disorders. His article on "Programmed learning and the Socratic dialogue," published in 1962, in the American Psychological Association's journal *American Psychologist*, was reprinted widely. After retiring, he served as director of APA's Office of Educational Affairs.

The first doctorate awarded to a woman was in 1955, to Eleanor A. Jacobs, a student of Ringwall. Jacobs began college at Buffalo State Teachers College (now SUNY College at Buffalo) but couldn't afford to finish and then, during the Second World War, joined the Navy. Afterwards, she was able to return to college with help from the GI Bill, earning her bachelor's degree at the University of Buffalo in 1949, and her master's degree in 1952. Jacobs conducted clinical research at the Veteran's Administration Medical Center in Buffalo, where she was promoted to Chief of the Psychology Service. She received a UB Alumni Association Distinguished Alumni Award at the time of her retirement in 1983. In 2004, she established the Eleanor Jacobs Scholarship Fund to support undergraduate or graduate women students pursuing degrees in the Department of Psychology.

### ***The University of Buffalo Joins SUNY, 1962***

The period from 1960 to 1962, was marked by the integration of the University of Buffalo into the State University of New York (SUNY) system. The University of Buffalo officially joined SUNY in 1962, and became the State University of New York at Buffalo, referred to informally as SUNYAB, University at Buffalo, or UB, and, most recently, as University at Buffalo-The State University of New York. The University at Buffalo has

become the largest and most comprehensive of the four SUNY research universities and the only campus with schools of law, pharmacy, architecture, and management and a complete health sciences center.

Enrollment in psychology programs and courses increased dramatically in the 1960's. For example, in 1960-61, the department counted only 88 majors, but by 1969-70, this number had increased ten-fold to 781. The decade of the 1960's, also marked the greatest increase in number of faculty in the department. The first large increase had been following the end of World War II. In the ten years from 1944 – 1955, the department increased from four to fifteen faculty, under the leadership of Scofield. The department's greatest growth in number of faculty occurred during the decade of the 1960's and under the leadership of Lester, who lead the department from 1952 – 1966. From 17 faculties in 1960, the department grew quickly to 30 in 1963, and by 1969, to 43 faculties.

### ***Ridge Lea Campus, 1969 – 1986***

In 1964, the decision had been made by SUNY that the University at Buffalo would have a new, \$130 million campus in Amherst. In 1969, as various university departments were lining up to move from the Main Street campus to the new campus, the department was told that, in exchange for volunteering to go to the temporary Ridge Lea Campus located to the east of Niagara Falls Boulevard and just south of Interstate 290 (now the Amherst Commerce Park), psychology would be among the very first departments to move to a new building on the new campus. In the end, psychology was one of the last departments to move, and was housed at 4230 Ridge Lea Road for 17 years, from 1969, until June, 1986. The several buildings on this campus housed most social science departments and many humanities departments, the dean's office, a branch of the university library, and a cafeteria. The campus included classrooms for small, upper-level courses, but larger courses continued to be taught on the Main Street campus, especially in Diefendorf Hall, and later, on the North (Amherst) Campus. The university provided bus service for students and faculty who needed to go to the other campuses.

Following Leary, Scofield, Lester, and Bugelski, the next chairman was Joseph M. Masling (Ohio State, 1952), who served from 1969 – 1972. Subsequent department chairs at the Ridge Lea Campus included James W. Julian (Illinois, 1963) from 1972 – 1975, Kenneth Levy (Purdue, 1972) from 1975 – 1978, Ira S. Cohen (Indiana, 1953) from 1978 – 1980, and Edward s. Katkin (Duke, 1963) from 1980 – 1986.

The number of women faculty in the early years, in addition to Olive Lester, was never more than one or two. The number of women faculty increased very slowly in the 1960's and 70's. By the 1980's, the proportion of women faculty was roughly a fifth; by the 1990's it had increased to a quarter; and by the late 1990's, the proportion was more than a third. These increasing proportions reflect slight additions in the number of women, but primarily the departures and retirements during these decades of men who were not replaced. For example, in

the 1980's there were often eight or nine women, but in the 1990's, this number had increased to no more than eight to ten women. The largest number of women faculty, eleven, was reached in 2006.

Throughout the 1960's, and into the 1970's, the expectation was that with the integration of the University of Buffalo into SUNY, the psychology department would grow substantially in size. In anticipation of this growth, Bugelski appointed a committee in 1968 to consider how the department should be organized. In 1969, this committee recommended the reorganization of the department into five graduate training areas: human experimental, animal and physiological, social-personality-organizational, helping professions, and developmental. The human experimental program was transformed into, first, a cognitive-human learning-information processing program and, now a program in Cognitive Psychology. The animal and physiological program became the program in physiological-comparative-behavior theory before becoming the biopsychology program and, most recently, the Behavioral Neuroscience program. The social-personality-organizational program has become the program in Social-Personality Psychology. The program in helping professions, under the leadership of Murray Levine (University of Pennsylvania, 1954) became a nationally prominent program in clinical and community psychology. The developmental psychology program was phased out in the mid 1980's. In 1980, the department formally approved a Master of Arts program in psychology.

### ***Park Hall, North (Amherst) Campus, 1986 to present***

In 1986, the psychology department moved to Park Hall, located on the North (Amherst) Campus of the university. The building was named after Dr. Julian Park, who had joined the University of Buffalo in 1913 as University Secretary, a position he held until 1954. Park had also been hired as a French instructor and, in 1918; he became the founding dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. As dean, Julian Park founded the University of Buffalo's tutorial system, in which seniors pursued independent study with encouragement from professors, giving the University of Buffalo a national reputation for innovative undergraduate liberal arts education. Constructed at a cost of \$9.7 million, the 74,500 square foot Park Hall is primarily an office complex with some seminar rooms, a few classrooms, and a number of specialized facilities for research and service, including space for the Psychological Services Center, and a glassed entrance atrium. In April, 1988, the Department of Psychology hosted the annual meeting of the Eastern Psychological Association. Most activities took place at the Hyatt Regency Hotel and the Buffalo Niagara Convention Center in downtown Buffalo, although many attendees also toured the Amherst campus and the research facilities in the new Park Hall.

The first chair of the psychology department in Park Hall was James Pomerantz (Yale, 1974) from 1986 – 1988. Following his departure, Robert Rossberg (New York University, 1956) served as interim chair for a year. During this period, the department established as its primary objective the enhancement of its research productivity and prominence as a graduate training program. This policy guided hiring and other decisions for a

number of years to come, particularly under the leadership of J. Sidney Shrauger (Duke, 1966), who served as department chair from 1989 – 1995. In the mid-1990's, the focus of the Clinical Psychology Program changed from community psychology to an increased emphasis on experimental psychopathology and empirically-based approaches to treatment. Also, in the late 1980's and early 1990's, the program in Social-Personality Psychology, under the leadership of Dean G. Pruitt (Yale, 1957), emerged as one of the strongest anywhere. More recent department chairs have included Mark Kristal (Kansas State, 1971) from 1995 – 1996, James Sawusch (Indiana, 1976) from 1996 – 1999, Jack Meacham (University of Michigan, 1972) from 1999 – 2002, Paul Luce (Indiana, 1986) from 2002 – 2011, and presently Stephen Tiffany (University of Wisconsin, 1984).