

Richard M. McFall

Dick McFall's connections with Indiana University go back much further than those of most retiring faculty. Dick was born in Bloomington, the son of a Methodist minister who was well known for his work with Herman Wells on shared social concerns, including civil rights on campus and in the community. But Dick's connections go back even farther. His great-great-great-grandfather, William Tinsley, was the architect for one of the first buildings on the original Bloomington campus. Its arches now are found in the Well House.

Dick completed his B.A. in psychology at DePauw University in 1961, and his Ph.D. in clinical psychology at The Ohio State University in 1965, under the tutelage of George Kelly. Kelly was an early proponent of the idea that individual differences in cognitive perception of the social environment are important in determining an individual's social and emotional behavior. Dick's graduate work focused on people's ongoing perceptions, interpretations, and monitoring of the environment—a research interest that has continued throughout his career.

In 1965 Dick took a position as assistant professor of psychology at the University of Wisconsin. He was part of a group of behaviorally oriented psychologists who emerged in the late 1960s, challenging the old psychoanalytic traditions of clinical psychology and arguing that psychological treatments and measurement techniques should be based on the best scientific evidence rather than on unproven theories. Dick's work during this period changed the way that people thought about measurement and treatment in the areas of smoking, social competence, and antisocial behavior. The influence of these early papers is reflected in the fact that many were reprinted multiple times and several were listed as Social Science Citation Classics.

In 1979 Dick returned to IU Bloomington as professor of psychology and director of the graduate program in clinical psychology. He continued his research while working to develop a doctoral training program devoted to a scientific approach to clinical psychology. The "clinical science" approach that Dick pioneered here is now applied widely in graduate programs across the country, and the National Institute of Mental Health training grant based on Dick's vision is now in its twenty-first year of funding.

At IU Dick was widely known for his effectiveness as a teacher and mentor, receiving the President's Award for distinguished teaching in 1993. Like his father, Dick worked for positive change both on the IU campus and in the community. As a member of the board of directors at the local community mental health center, Dick took the strong, and at the time, unique, stand that all services provided at the center should be based on the best scientific evidence of effectiveness, not on unproven traditions handed down by therapists. He convinced the board to adopt this position, setting the goal of implementing the very best treatments available. Although this was not an easy process, the mental health center has won national recognition for its commitment to evidence-based treatment, including a prestigious award for the quality of its services and its research-based approach to mental health services.

In recent years Dick's research and training philosophy have focused on integrating clinical psychology with theory and methods drawn from particularly successful areas of psychology, such as cognitive science and neuroscience. In one line of research Dick has been applying the new quantitative methods derived from cognitive science to the study of social perception, social interpretation, social memory, and the relationship of all of these things to psychopathology and disordered behavior. In a way, this study brings Dick full-circle to his graduate work with Kelly, albeit with modern methods, theories, and models that were not available when Dick started on this path.

A description of Dick's influence on IU and Bloomington could take all of the available space, but it is not possible to understand Dick's career without considering the impact that he has had on clinical psychology at the national level. In 1991 Dick wrote a brief but powerful paper that has been a crucible for change in clinical psychology. The paper, entitled "Manifesto for a Science of Clinical Psychology," asserted that the only legitimate and acceptable form of clinical psychology was one based on the best science available, and that clinical practice and training therefore must be based on scientific evidence as well. The paper energized both the proponents and opponents of a scientific approach, and it is a rare psychologist who cannot use "the Manifesto" as a touchstone to define his or her own position on clinical psychology and its future. Although the paper remains controversial within the broader field, university-based training programs increasingly have come over to Dick's point of view.

In 1994 Dick organized and chaired the conference on "Clinical Science in the 21st Century," which was held here in Bloomington. The conference brought together leading figures from the best university-based programs in clinical psychology, with the goal of planning for the future of a scientifically-based applied psychology. Under Dick's leadership, the conference gave rise to the Academy of Psychological Clinical Science, an organization of leading clinical science training programs, which has become a strong advocate

for evidence-based clinical assessment, treatment, and graduate training. Dick served as its first president. This spring the academy will be celebrating its tenth anniversary, and its influence continues to expand.

In anticipation of Dick's retirement, a festschrift was prepared in his honor in conjunction with the American Psychological Society's 2004 annual convention, where an array of scholars presented papers reflecting the clinical science view that Dick pioneered. At a celebratory dinner, colleagues and students from Wisconsin and Indiana testified to Dick's influence on their careers and on clinical psychology as a field. The same week Dick received the Distinguished Alumnus Award from The Ohio State University Department of Psychology.

Although retired from the classroom, Dick continues to be active on the national stage and in the lab. No doubt his release from teaching responsibilities will allow him more time at the Michigan cabin that he shares with his wife Kathy, but outside the classroom we expect that his advocacy of a clinical science approach and his integrative research program will continue unabated.

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