

# Department of Psychology

## Distinguished Emeritus Lecturer Series



**DR. ALISTAIR MACLEAN, Queen's University**

**TALK: Perspectives from Sleep**

### **ABSTRACT**

In the early 1950s sleep research was transformed by the work of Kleitman, Aserinsky and Dement. The correspondence of Rapid Eye Movement sleep with dream reports caught the imagination of many researchers and led to an expansion of interest in all aspects of sleep and circadian rhythms. Though long regarded as a passive period of existence our increased understanding of sleep has brought new perspectives that have illuminated our understanding of both sleep and wakefulness. Hobson (1989) observed that "more has been learned about sleep in the past 60 years than in the preceding 6,000." I started studying sleep professionally in 1967 and have been fortunate to live through an exhilarating period of research. I hope to convey some of that excitement and the new perspectives by describing: the effects of alcohol on sleep; the relationship between sleep mechanisms and depression; and the effects of sleepiness on performance.

### **BIOGRAPHY**

Dr. MacLean was born in Aberdeen, Scotland and educated at the University of Aberdeen and, as a Commonwealth Scholar, at Queen's University where he graduated with his Ph.D. in 1969. After two years at the University of Edinburgh as a Post-Doctoral Fellow, he returned to the Department of Psychology at Queen's in 1971 where he was promoted to Full Professor in 1984. From 1998 to 2002 he served as Head of the Department of Psychology, from 2002 to 2006 as Associate and then Vice Dean and from 2006 to 2013 as Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Science. He is a Registered Psychologist in the Province of Ontario. His research interest is in sleep. In addition to clinical work with sleep disordered patients, he has carried out research on a number of different aspects of sleep including: the effects of hypnotic drugs on sleep; the effects of alcohol on sleep; the relationship between sleep and depression; the effect of the menstrual cycle on sleep; the effects of age on sleep; the effects of sleep loss and sleep displacement on subjective state and performance; the measurement of sleepiness; and the nature of the basic mechanisms controlling sleep. Most of his recent work has been on the effects of sleep loss on performance and, in particular, the effects of prolonged wakefulness on sleepiness and driving simulator performance. Dr MacLean has been a member of the research or fellowship committees of the Non-Medical Use of Drugs Directorate, the Medical Research Council and the Ontario Mental Health Foundation. He has also served as President of the Canadian Sleep Society. In 1988 he was a winner of the Alumni Award for Excellence in Teaching and in 1990 was elected a Fellow of the Canadian Psychological Association. Other honours include, in 2009, the T. Geoffrey Flynn Advancement Champion Award, and, in 2013, a Queen's University Distinguished Service Award. In 2013-2014 he was appointed the Honorary President of the Arts and Science Undergraduate Society.

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