



May 8, 2006

CPRF unveils new book celebrating brain science in Canada, encourages more mental health research

TORONTO — The Canadian Psychiatric Research Foundation (CPRF) is excited to launch the commemorative book, *Psyche in the Lab: Celebrating Brain Science in Canada*.

Marking 25 years of funding psychiatric researchers at Canadian universities and teaching hospitals, the CPRF is releasing the new book that explores the science of the brain and sheds light on the roots of altruism. *Psyche in the Lab* is written by leading mental health expert and former CPRF board member, Dr. Mary V. Seeman, and Neil Seeman, a health policy researcher who teaches health law at Ryerson University.

The book rigorously chronicles psychiatric research in Canada. Readers will be exposed to information concerning Alzheimer's disease, schizophrenia, mood and anxiety disorders, developmental disabilities, substance abuse and family dysfunction, as well as end-of-life distress. Authors Mary V. Seeman and Neil Seeman lift the veil of secrecy still surrounding these mental health conditions, while making readers aware of Canadian scientists working to better understand the mind and its many complexities. *Psyche in the Lab* showcases the accomplishments of highly respected, but seldom heard researchers like Dr. Remi Quirion, Dr. Jeanette Holden and Dr. Juan Carlos Negrete. It also explores the roles of funders and the many Canadians who live with mental illness.

In the book, Don Tapscott, one of the world's leading authorities on business and a benefactor of schizophrenia studies at the University of Toronto, dispels a destructive myth about mental illness: "There is a pernicious notion that mental illness is somehow a flaw or failure in a person's character, rather than a treatable disease. As a society we pay a very heavy price for this false perception."

Mental illness has profoundly influenced the lives and careers of those profiled in the book. From their interviews, an important theme emerges: mental illnesses are a daily fact of life for more than 20 per cent of all Canadians. Annually, an estimated one million adults struggle with a serious mental malady, which is the leading cause of disability in developed nations. Anxiety disorders, phobias, depression and schizophrenia are now more widespread than heart diseases, cancer, arthritis and diabetes combined. Even an



estimated 40 per cent of physicians report having been clinically depressed at some time. But only 16 per cent sought help from colleagues and a mere 13 per cent took antidepressants, according to Canadian studies.

The authors reveal that biological predispositions and social forces are still behind all psychiatric illnesses. No matter how affluent and educated, no matter how warm and cohesive, no family is spared. Not a single person is immune. Mental illness, readers will learn, poses significant emotional and financial burdens on today's society. However, when it comes to the funding of psychiatric research, its own hurdles remain, including public stigma. In order to reduce the toll of psychiatric disease, the fostering of fieldwork must take high priority, the authors contend.

“Starting out as an account of psychiatric research, *Psyche in the Lab* spontaneously evolves into a ‘testament to human resilience,’” CPRF Chair Kevin McNeil said. The book is dedicated to the youth of Canada, who will be inspired to deepen their knowledge about mental illnesses and devote themselves to mental health research, philanthropy, policy change and the support of those who hurt. It illustrates how scientists, philanthropists and patients can all work together constituting Canada's hope for the future.

Dr. Mary V. Seeman, and Neil Seeman will be available for media interviews prior to the Book Launch. Book Launch will be held on Tuesday, May 23, 2006 at the National Club 303 Bay Street, Toronto, ON at 6:00 p.m. by invitation only. Press is welcome. For more information, contact Andrea Swinton, Canadian Psychiatric Research Foundation, Telephone: (416) 351-7757 Ext. 22, e-mail: aswinton@cprf.ca.

The Canadian Psychiatric Research Foundation (CPRF) is a national charitable organization that has been raising and distributing funds for psychiatric research and awareness in Canada since 1980. CPRF also produces the best-selling When Something's Wrong series of Handbooks, which translates this research into information that can be used in communities at the grassroots level.