
Book Reviews / Comptes rendus

Herr, E. L., Cramer, S. H., & Niles, S. G. (2004). *Career guidance and counseling through the lifespan—Systematic approaches* (6th ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon. ISBN 0-321-08139-0. 768 pages.

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In *Career Guidance and Counseling Through the Lifespan—Systematic Approaches* (6th edition), the authors take on the enormous task of providing a current and comprehensive approach to the theory and practice of career development. After seven years, Edwin Herr, Stanley Cramer, and Spencer Niles published this sixth edition, updating the role of career guidance and counselling in a global economy with changing social, political, and economic trends. The authors synthesize a wealth of information in a systematic manner—from elementary school through to retirement—making this book a suitable educational tool as well as a valuable general resource.

The text is organized into 16 chapters, covering the time span from the 1800s to the present, and offering suggestions for future research. Chapters 1 through 6 serve to anchor the reader in the historical and contemporary aspects of the practice of career development, including topics such as emerging challenges, the meaning of, access to, and adjustment to work, the American occupational structure, diverse populations, and the systematic planning for career guidance and counselling. Chapters 7 to 12 look at the process of career and guidance counselling across a lifespan: in elementary schools, junior high/middle school, senior high school, higher education, workplace, and special adult career concerns. Lastly, chapters 13 through 16 explore topics concerning helping strategies, the effective use of occupational information, assessment instruments and practices, research, and social issues relevant to career and guidance counselling.

The authors draw extensively upon research to support their arguments, resulting in almost 100 pages of references. Herr and his colleagues engage in a type of qualitative meta-analysis by summarizing and synthesizing existing research and using it to draw conclusions about, and to offer various recommendations for, evidence-based career counselling practices. Through the examination of numerous topics in career guidance and counselling, career services are recognized as instruments of human development and mental health. The authors emphasize the necessity of both developmental and remedial approaches.

Although the book offers a multitude of statistics, research, and resources, they are primarily representative of the United States. The information is conveyed mostly through text, with only occasional tables, and readers could benefit from the addition of helpful diagrams and visual representations of explained principles. Educators contemplating the use of this publication may consider supplementing student

readings with case studies to facilitate the application of research and theory to practice, as the book makes reference to only general populations. The value of this text, however, lies in its effort to comprehensively address the theoretical and practical aspects of career development as it relates to the changing nature of the workforce. The book offers updated references, addresses diverse populations, explains workforce trends, outlines a planned approach across the lifespan in a variety of settings, and does not attempt to oversimplify the complexity of the career counselling process. Its far-reaching scope is often astounding.

In terms of application, I have found that the book accurately reflects and helps to explain my current experience in the workforce and guides me in the process of career counselling with students in a post-secondary institution. It is a valuable resource for (a) practitioners, as it provides systematic, integrative, and instructive information; (b) researchers, for its wealth of existing research, suggested needs, and reviewed methods for future research; and (c) educators, for the scope of updated information covered in a single publication.