

COUNSELLING FOR CAREER DEVELOPMENT

By E. L. Tolbert. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1974. Pp. 340.

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Tolbert's textbook is enthusiastic and pragmatic. It focuses on counselling with a purpose — that of career development. Attention is paid to high-school students who won't be going on to college or university. "The emphasis is on practical applications supported by relevant theory and research (p. x)." Throughout, there is a constant stream of ideas, of information, and of case studies related to career development.

To complement this down-to-earth approach, each chapter has an annotated bibliography. Here the reader is directed to the classics in each area: Borow, Crites, Roe, Super, for instance. There are also references to recent research and innovations, for instance computerized information services, K-12 career curricula, simulated work kits. Finally, there are suggestions for experiential learning through such things as interviews, field trips, information searches, and micro-counselling.

This is an American book. The chapter on "The Information System" provides much information which is not relevant in the Canadian context. However, the basic thrust of this chapter is important: the author reminds us that counselors have traditionally concerned themselves mostly with information for those students going on to college and university. Tolbert lists 14 types of post-secondary training, of which only 3 are related to academia. He adds, "at the risk of being unfair to many counselors, it may be said that counselors and guidance workers tend to know very little about numbers one through eleven (p. 101)." The reader is then introduced to eleven alternatives to college training, and encouraged to go farther afield for more complete information. Less than complete is the small section devoted to counselling women — Tolbert apologizes for the superfluity of a "section on the uniqueness of counselling girls and women"; and he provides little recent additional resource material on this most important — not in the least superfluous — subject!

"Finding and Organizing Local Information" is full of ideas and suggestions for this mammoth task. The reader is also directed to the excellent works by Norris, Zeran, and Hatch, and Hoppock. In connection with this aspect of career counselling, a strong plea is made for the inclusion of "support personnel" in guidance work. This, together with Tolbert's views on placement and accountability in secondary-school counselling, ought to stimulate new approaches to old problems.

"Decision making is perhaps the key element in career counselling and guidance (p. 162)," and Tolbert devotes two full chapters to individual and group decision-making. There is rather detailed material, both theoretical and practical, about the various theoretical models, the

skills and processes of decision making, and suggested methods for counselors to follow.

The role of the counselor, according to this author, must be expanded beyond the "helping relationship" and should include outreach or social action work. Career counseling "requires . . . considerable emphasis on information, decision making and placement . . . but this is not to say that good human relationships are unnecessary (p. 159)."

An Instructor's Manual accompanies the text. It may be used as presented, or with modifications; the course is planned for a 20-session semester. For each chapter the Manual provides a list of objectives, class discussion topics, and various evaluative procedures. The instructor may choose from multiple-choice and free-response questions (with answers given in the Manual), from take-home questions designed to elicit a more thorough-going study, and from "competency" tests of applied counselling. All of this may or may not be useful, depending on the instructor's proclivity for following instructions.

This is not a big book, nor a heavy one. But it does provide a clearly written and well-organized overview of career development counselling for secondary school. If the student is encouraged to enrich the text with the suggested additional reading, the result ought to be a good introduction to this field, with a healthy bias towards practical matters and the "practical" stream.