

REVIEW

CAREER GUIDANCE: WHO NEEDS IT, WHO PROVIDES IT, WHO CAN IMPROVE IT?

By Eli Ginzberg. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1971. Pp. 356. \$7.95.

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Ginzberg feels that counsellors have not done an adequate job in the past. Consequently, they should concentrate on doing a good job in one basic area — that is, the area of career guidance, which, as he puts it, is the “process of structured intervention aimed at helping individuals to take advantage of the educational, training, and occupational opportunities that are available.”

The methods employed by Ginzberg to reach these conclusions on the inadequacies of counsellors, and his insistence on this restricted counsellor role, could be likened to the inexcusable methodology used by the Hickling-Johnston firm, which recently “evaluated” vocational guidance in Ontario (Research Study No. 19 — “Guidance”); that is, the use of a few interviews, reference to several out-dated reports, and actual evaluation of only a limited number of schools. Although some of the resulting generalizations are relevant, many, such as the following, are questionable:

1. Elementary school counsellor contributions remain to be proven,
2. There is no evidence to suggest that coaches and teachers are less successful than those who are called guidance counsellors,
3. Most students will not discuss any personal problems with their guidance counsellor because they see him as a tool of the educational system.

Two of the worst chapters deal with personal assessment and information processes. In the chapter on personal assessment, one of the few worthwhile suggestions is the comment that there is the need to emphasize the link between personal assessment and career planning. Much of the rest of the chapter is either out-dated or an airing of common knowledge. Most of what Ginzberg says in the chapter on information processes has been said before, and much better, by authors such as Isaacson and Norris, Zeran and Hatch.

Ginzberg's schema for career patterns — the individualistic, the organizational, the market, and the peripheral groups — is well presented, as are his chapters on "Advice to Advice-Givers" and "Advice to the Public." These two chapters should make many counsellors angry, but perhaps that is a good thing. Some of the advice is pertinent: the need to link guidance to other services, and the need for leaders in the profession to encourage accountability and innovation; other advice is regressive: educational and vocational guidance should be made the primary commitment of the profession, and guidance services in the elementary school should be reduced.

Ginzberg's arguments are sound only *IF* one can accept his basic premise, namely, that the major guidance concern is providing "help in locating a job, moving to a better job, acquiring skills that can facilitate career programs, finding a new career if forced to retire early, adjusting to an urban labor market after having grown up on a farm, re-entering employment after a period spent at home raising children." Hopefully, counsellors see their role in broader terms; and, this being the case, *Career Guidance* has only limited value as a resource book on vocational guidance.