It should be noted, however, that this edition has been somewhat compromised by a large number of rather dated articles. The most recent entry was first published in 1971 and the earliest, in 1948. The median date of publication is 1965, which serves to indicate that the current edition is not an extensive update, as is suggested in the preface. This observation is reinforced by the fact that the preface, itself, is essentially an edited reprint of that contained in the second edition. Further, while the existence of the 1974 revision of the APA's Standards for Educational and Psychological Tests is acknowledged by a


Reviewed by:
Larry Eberlein
Department of Educational Psychology
University of Alberta
Edmonton, Alberta

This book is directed at counsellors in schools and should be read by those who are concerned about the legal responsibilities that a counsellor may have to clients, to the parents of clients, to the school or to society generally. The book focuses on the counsellor, considered part of "school personnel," and distinguishes him from a psychiatrist or psychologist.

Most articles on law and ethics stress the potential civil liability of a counsellor or a psychologist. This book in addition spends a substantial amount of time stressing some of the potential problems a counsellor might face being charged under the equivalent of the Canadian criminal code. While the authors reflect American law, the criminal code would be interpreted in much the same way in Canada. Areas of criminal responsibility with which the book is concerned include counsellors becoming an accessory after the fact to crimes committed by a client, encouraging an illegal abortion, improper giving of drugs (as in the case of the counsellor who provides his own personal tranquilizers or her personal birth control drugs to a teenage client), encouraging civil disobedience, or in general, contributing to the delinquency of a minor.

Civil liability is probably more dominant in a counsellor's thinking. It is doubtful that after reading this book a counsellor would come away with the feeling that he had no need for malpractice insurance. The authors assume that when a counsellor assumes the role of a professional he will respect the law and ethics as they apply to that profession. A failure to do so can have serious consequences for the offending counsellor. The authors discuss both individual and group counselling and possible malpractice claims. This discussion includes birth control, abortion, prescription and administration of drugs, problems under the illegal search and seizure section of the American law, libel, slander and the invasion of the client's right to privacy.

The book has a number of strengths and weaknesses. It is readable and down to earth, but the unfortunate use of extensive footnotes in the body of the text interferes with the flow of the material. One would have wished that the footnotes and case quotations would have been gathered either at the end of a chapter or at the end of the book.

One would also have wished more discussion of the right to privacy and a clearer annunciation that confidential or privileged communication is a right that belongs to a client and not to the counsellor. Although the authors raise the issue of "legal protection for whom?" it would have been helpful to discuss in more detail the fact that counsellors in every situation can be forced by the client to reveal to others or to testify in a court of law about things that went on in the supposedly "confidential" relationship between them. One often assumes the interest of the counsellor and the interest of the client are similar. However, this is sometimes not the case. Should a counsellor be sued for malpractice, what happened in the interview between the counsellor and client is within the realm of court enquiry. This could include a subpoena of all the counsellor's notes and information on which a claim of malpractice may be based. A counsellor could be cross-examined at discovery proceedings before trial.
There is another situation in which a breach of the confidence of the relationship may be required by the counsellor. There have been cases in which testing was done on a client prior to and after an automobile accident. Such testing demonstrated a drop in certain mental and physical capabilities of that client, possibly as a result of the accident. In this type of situation, the client has every right to require the counsellor to reveal such information in court even though it was thought to be confidential at the time.

Another weakness in the book is the emphasis on malpractice or tort law which usually relate to elements of negligence on the part of the counsellor. One would have desired a balance to include concepts of contract law and breach of contract by the counsellor. Whenever a counsellor and client enter into a counselling relationship, there is an express or implied contract between the two. Often many things are assumed and not written down nor thoroughly understood. Much that happens in a counselling relationship could be construed as a breach of some of the client rights or counsellor obligations entered into in that particular relationship.

It would have also been helpful if the book had discussed more extensively the licensing rules as they relate to psychologists. In the future these will become more important to counsellors. More information about the rules of courtroom evidence could have rounded out this otherwise excellent book.

The authors reflect the diversity and uncertainty about many elements of the law. They also use many examples for illustration so that their points can be clearly understood. There is a good discussion of school law and extensive citation of legal reasoning. There is also an excellent discussion relating to the age of consent.

This reviewer would strongly urge all counsellors and psychologists to study this book with some care. At the very least it would put the counsellor on guard and make him aware of potential problems that he might face. Because of the lack of adequately licensed professionals, schools often provide the services and relationships that would otherwise be provided by these professionals. But he should not delude himself. He has no special license to fulfill the humanistic role demanded by the counsellor. And he faces an ever-present danger of liability for harm done to a counsellee because of the unique relationship that exists between them.

Know Your Own Personality, Hans Eysenck and Glenn Wilson, London: Temple Smith, 1975, 206 pp. $7.95.

Reviewed by:
Lloyd W. West
Department of Educational Psychology
University of Calgary
Calgary, Alberta

By and large, the task of the counsellor is to help others get to know themselves. Through acceptance, labelling, and reflection of feeling, the counsellor engages his client in self-exploration which, hopefully, leads to self-awareness. By supporting group norms of self-disclosure, authentic feedback, and open confrontation, the counsellor also promotes the self-understanding of group members. In both individual and group work, counsellors generally assume that self-knowledge facilitates personal adjustment and thus “knowing your own personality” becomes a major goal of counselling. Toward the achievement of that goal, perhaps Eysenck and Wilson have something substantial to offer.

Although few counsellors would attempt to refute the ancient Greek injunction to “Know Thyself,” controversy over the nature of man, why he is what he is, and how he comes to know who he is, continues unabated. Is personality genetically coded and relatively immutable or is it inherently formless and endlessly malleable? Do we “discover” ourselves or do we “create” ourselves? Are we the “product” of historical events or the “project” of our own choices? Perhaps we create pseudo-issues simply by posing such either/or questions.

At a time when the zeitgeist is strongly phenomenological and environmentalist, Eysenck and Wilson hold with the primacy of genetic factors as the determinants of personality. The role of the environment, we are told, is limited to “effecting slight changes and perhaps a kind of cover-up” (p. 20). Since there is really very little we can do to change our personality in any fundamental sense, we may be well advised to submit to reality, discover who we are by whatever means available to us, and plan our life in the light of that knowledge.

While the zeitgeist also clearly favours interpersonal and encounter approaches to self-discovery, Eysenck and Wilson confidently advocate