

BOOK REVIEWS

THEORIES OF CAREER DEVELOPMENT

By Samuel H. Osipow, New York, Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1968, pp. 259, \$5.75.

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Theories of Vocational Guidance have long ago advanced from Parsons "pigeon-hole" concept to more elaborate and developmental approaches. However, depth research in the field has been confined to a few major studies made since the mid-point of this century.

In the preface to *Theories of Career Development*, Osipow declares the primary aim of the book: "To fill the need that exists for an examination and an evaluation of current theoretical and empirical findings relevant to the vocational decision making process (p. viii)." His secondary aims are (a) to compare the various theories: their differences, similarities, strengths and weaknesses; (b) to synthesize general theoretical statements and identify ingredients common to most theories; and (c) to consider the theories in light of their implications for practising career counselors.

In reference to most of these objectives (with perhaps the exception of (c) above), Osipow succeeds most nobly. He makes brief, yet adequate and comprehensive reviews of the theories; he draws on a wide range of research—most of which is very current; his format and organizational structure of the book very suitably fits his objectives; and he writes in a style which adequately explains the content of the theories under review without becoming too jargonese.

After an introductory chapter in which he discusses the role, nature and definitions of *theory*, Osipow reviews the following major authors and theories:

1. Roe's personality theory of career choice,
2. Holland's career typology of vocational behaviour,
3. The Bordin, Nachman, Segal approach of psychoanalytical conceptions of career choice,
4. The Ginzberg and associates theory of vocational development: irreversibility, vocational choice periods, **compromise**,
5. Super's developmental self-concept theory of vocational behaviour and his theory of vocational maturity.
6. Several approaches of what Osipow terms as *Personality and Career theories*:
 - e.g. (a) personality *values* in career development,
 - (b) psychological *needs* and vocational choice,
 - (c) *trait-factor* approach to vocational behaviour.
7. A sociological theory of career development, which Osipow refers to as the situational approach—social systems and career decisions. (The classic studies of Hollingshead, Miller and Form, and more recent researchers.)

Those theories and empirical studies which have recently received em-

phasis in the general literature of the field are given comparable preferential emphasis in the book. Thus, Osipow devotes most of his reviews to the works of Roe, Holland, Super and the Ginzberg group.

The general format of each of the major theories reviewed consists of:

1. The statement of the theory—its historical background and development, a discussion of its major thesis,
2. Research—empirical studies conducted by both the proponent of the theory and others who have later tested it or applied it to research projects,
3. Status—an evaluation of the theory in terms of its strengths, weaknesses, its role as a stimulator of further research, and its implications for career counselors.

Osipow devotes one chapter of his book to a comparison and interrelatedness of the theories. Among other general conclusions, he feels that from an empirical validation point of view, only Roe's personality theory consistently fails, and from a longitudinal research point of view, Super's self-concept theory is most valuable.

In his concluding chapter, Osipow attempts to synthesize a general career development theory, project future developments and suggests further research. Here he leans toward the evolution of the systems approach (Mierzwa, Hilton, etc.) which embodies both the situational and individual factors influencing career development—a system which Osipow claims takes "the most useful concepts of each theory of career development (p. 241)."

The concise reviews and evaluations and the excellent format which Osipow has used make the book an invaluable aid for both guidance and counseling students who are seeking an over-view of the theory field and research relating to it, and the practising counselor who is attempting to formulate a meaningful basis on which to build his career counselling techniques.

However, the book is not nearly thorough enough to act as a fully comprehensive text on career development theories, and should not be used—nor was it meant to be used—in that manner.

RESEARCH IN COUNSELING: EVALUATION AND REFOCUS

Edited by John M. Whiteley. Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill, 1967. Pp. xvi + 297. \$7.65.

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Research in Counseling is a collection of papers which were presented at the Bromwoods Invitational Conference on Research Problems in Counseling, plus reports of the Task Groups at the Conference, and conclusions by the editor. The purpose of this Conference was to provide an evaluation and refocus of counseling research.

This book is divided into five parts. In each of the first three parts two major papers, followed by their discussions, are presented. The topics of these three parts are: "Research on the Selection of Clients," "Research on the Selection of Counselors," and "Research on the Assessment of Counseling Outcome."