

Book Reviews

Warren Gribbons and Paul R. Lohnes.

CAREERS IN THEORY AND EXPERIENCE:

A twenty-year longitudinal study.

New York: State University of New York Press, 1982.

145 pp. \$44.50 cloth. \$14.95 paper.

In this slim, 145-page volume, Gribbons and Lohnes report on the final phase of their 20-year, longitudinal Career Development Study, which follows the career development of 57 boys and 54 girls from the 8th Grade to the present. The first phase of the study was published in 1968 as *Emerging Careers*, by the Teachers' College Press.

According to the authors, the purpose of their study, modelled on Super and Overstreet's Career Pattern Study published in 1960, is to add to the basic research literature in vocational development, in the hope of enhancing the understanding of career processes. As scientists, the authors aim to "know how to help young people in their personal struggles for career development"; as educators, they "want to see our schools do a better job of guiding youth toward useful and satisfying careers" (p.11).

The first three chapters examine the subjects of the study as they proceed through the three sub-stages - Tentative, Transition, and Trial - of Super's Exploration Stage of career development. We are introduced to the purposes of the study, the subjects followed, the methods and instruments used, and the statistical techniques applied during the first five-year phase of the study. The status of the subjects, four years beyond high school, is then described at length, with close attention paid to the subjects' educational attainments and educational and occupational aspirations, and the relationship of vocational maturity as measured in the subjects at the beginning of the study to that measured four years beyond high school. The authors define five "dimension variables" of career maturity which, they feel, are essential to career development during the Exploration years. Chapter 3 is concerned with the subjects during the Trial period, six years beyond high school.

Chapter 4 considers probability models for the study of career patterns, and in great technical detail describes Markov chain analyses as used in this study. The authors conclude that their statistical prediction system (using Markov chains and discriminant function analysis) "has great promise for longitudinal research on human development" (p.92).

The career patterns of six of the subjects, whose case histories are reviewed in Chapter 5, each correspond to one of four "Differentiated Career Processes" described as degeneration, emerging maturity, constant maturity, and constant immaturity. Chapter 6 details the development of a "Readiness for Career Planning Scale" to measure vocational maturity, which was refined during the course of the study and appears in its final form, together with a manual, in the Appendix of the book. The 7th Chapter looks at the occupational lives of the subjects in 1980, 21 years after the study was first undertaken, and, in the final chapter, implications of the study for educational and career guidance are considered.

The publishers describe this book, on the back cover, as "highly readable on a non-technical level." They claim, further, that the book "provides provocative and helpful insights into the experience of developing careers in America." Both these statements are patently misleading. This is a highly technical book with no fewer than 76 tables and very detailed analyses of data, which seriously impinge on the book's "readability".

The practising counsellor who, guided by the publisher's description, reads the book with a view to applying its contents to the practice of vocational guidance, will be disappointed. The authors "want to see our schools do a better job of guiding youth toward useful and satisfying careers" (p.1) and, further, state that "our research is intended to help young people plan and decide their career issues" (p.5). While there are promising moments of useful insight, the authors do not sufficiently develop them. For example, each of the four differentiated career processes, reflected in the case histories in Chapter 5, are defined in just one sentence. I searched in vain for reference to them elsewhere in the book. This is unfortunate, for these case histories are fascinating to read. I would have liked to learn more about the career processes and the authors' view of their implications for career counselling of young people. Some additional conclusions as to the practice of vocational guidance in the school are taken up very briefly in the final chapter, but again without being further developed.

On the whole, I had difficulty following the sequence of the study. The book jumps back and forth in time in the course of describing the study at its various phases. I found that the original goals of the study, and its results after 10 years when the subjects were age 23, were neatly summarized

by Crites in his work "Vocational Psychology" (1969, pp.201-203) in a most readable manner, something I cannot say for the work under review. There was the added frustration of a reference in the text omitted in the reference list, despite a listing of this reference in the index.

What can be said in the book's favour? John Crites differentiates between vocational psychology - "the study of the individual's vocational behaviour and development through the years of choice and adjustment" (p.23) - and vocational guidance - "a process...of assistance designed to aid the individual in choosing and adjusting to a vocation" (p.23). Gribbons and Lohnes "pursue scientific knowledge of career development" (p.1), and indeed this work is true to that pursuit and, to my mind, to Crites' definition of vocational psychology. As such, it should be appreciated most by those with a highly sophisticated understanding of and interest in the application of statistical techniques, such as those employed in this study, which take up a major portion of the book. Longitudinal studies, especially spanning 20 years, are a near-extinct species, and the authors must be commended for their dedication in the research of career development with the subjects at hand. It is to be hoped that their work will stimulate further scientific study in the vocational psychology field, and this may well prove to be the book's greatest contribution.

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Mireille Levesque, Louise Sylvain.
APRES L'ECOLE SECONDAIRE;
Etudier ou travailler - choisit-on-vraiment?
Quebec: Conseil superieur de l'éducation, 1982.
634 pp. No charge.

This book describes an effort to find out to what extent individuals actually choose to enter the labour market or to continue studies after secondary school completion.

Two theories form the background to the authors' hypotheses, which are stated loosely and enquire into the relationship between variables associated with society, the school, and the occupational situation. In addition to these socio-economic variables, the authors were interested in the influence of variables associated with an individual's personal attitudes towards school and work. They succeed in developing some creative and well-thought-out questions for use in measurement, but their research model and method of analysis,