

Editorial

Renewed interest in vocational education

There seems to be a renewed interest in vocational education, as well as in technology education, if current publications are an indicator of people's views and concerns. Dr. Donald Glendenning, retired president of the Canadian Vocational Association, in a recent article titled *Where are our universities?* (1994), observes that "based on my experience I can only conclude that Canadian educators, or at least those who publish their findings and views, are not very interested in vocational education." This conclusion, he says, came after considerable efforts to find information about technical and vocational education, and what the current literature has to say about vocational training of secondary school-age youth and adults. In his opinion, "there is little available research being published in Canada about technical and vocational education."

Dr. Glendenning is concerned about the university's role in research in the area of technical and vocational education. As a follow-up concern, Melville J. Appell, guest editorialist for the current issue of *Counseling Today*, calls attention to the lack of sufficient counselling for educational and career planning of students, and counsellors' lack of interest in the vocational guidance of students.

Mr. Appell believes that school counsellors have not staked out their territory in an area of expertise that is sorely needed, i.e., educational and career counselling. He also believes that counsellors are concentrating on the mental health aspects of their job to the exclusion or neglect of students who wish to plan their future. He fears that academics who are training counsellors "know little of employment and how to get there from here. In turn, their students don't learn very much about the world of work in which they are supposed to operate. . . ."

Vocational education and, of course, vocational guidance and career planning are important aspects of the mandate that secondary schools have for the education of students. As well, universities, whose job includes the training of guidance counsellors, must also be concerned about the quality of training their students receive in preparation for counselling secondary-school students who need career planning.

In this issue of the *Journal* we have concentrated on several components of vocational education. Three papers examine the state of vocational education in Quebec. Their focus is on obstacles and opportunities for vocational education in Quebec's schools, some of the recent major reforms in the Quebec Ministry of Education relative to vocational education, and, finally, a demythologizing of some ideas about vocational education. Further, Prof. Andrew Carson writes about the applications of Holland's vocational theory to vocational counselling and vocational education.

Other papers in this issue deal with such diverse topics as: (1) a re-examination of the vocational-liberal studies controversy, (2) a review of the literature on Hackman and Oldham's theory of job characteristics, and (3) the question of whether or not a *feminist pedagogy* exists, either in theory or practice.

W.M.T.

REFERENCES

- Appell, M. J. (Oct. 1994). Emphasis on vocational counseling may help profession create identity. *Counselling Today* 37 (4), p. 20.
- Glendenning, D. (Spring, 1994). Where are our universities? *Canadian Vocational Journal*, 29(2), 17.

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