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THOUGHTS FROM A PROFESSOR:
AN INTERVIEW WITH CARNEY STRANGE

Jeff McColloch

Dr. Carney Strange is an Associate Professor in College Student Personnel at Bowling Green State University. He was a visiting professor at Indiana University during Fall Semester, 1988.

How did you get into the field of Student Affairs?

Like most people in the field, I got into it by accident. It is not something I wanted all my life. I was close to 27 or 28 when I decided this was something I could sink my teeth into. I came out of a small liberal arts college with a degree in French literature and classical languages. I didn't have a clear sense of what to do and didn't feel too bad about that. My life vision was short term. So I did what everyone else did who graduated from a liberal arts college, I taught. I taught high school for two years and taught all kinds of topics--chemistry, biology, music.

After that I spent two years in alternate service as a conscientious objector. I worked as a community organizer for the Catholic dioceses of Davenport, Iowa. As part of that I spent two years in the trenches of humanity working with low income families and elderly. I also had a part-time job at Mt. St. Clair College in Clinton, Iowa. My job there was to work as a maintenance man at the college. When they found out I was credentialed, I also taught there. So I was either working on plumbing or teaching social work. I knew my interest had always been in service-oriented fields. So I got into working for a drug/alcohol community service program. It was there that I heard about fellowships that the government was sponsoring for a drug counselling master's degree at the University of Iowa. I got one and attended the University of Iowa for two years.

My goal as a beginning master's student was clearly to be a clinician, a practitioner, and to work in a community-based drug alcohol program. I remember on my application them asking if you are interested in doing research and I said "only what's required." Then it asked if you are interested in pursuing a Ph.D., and I said "no, I am not." After about a year in the program, you had to choose one of the programs and I chose college student personnel. I always liked college settings. I like working with people who want to learn, who want to set goals, who are active questioners, and that is what attracted me to the field. It took about a year and I knew I was hooked.

How has the field of student development changed since Bob Brown's "Student Development in Tomorrow's Higher Education: A Return to the Academy" monograph was published in 1972?

I think for a long time this field meant being a good, kind, personable individual. Those were the models that we had. Someone who understands human behavior. Very much like the counselor-oriented model. I think something certainly changed with the 60s. We began to see ourselves as negotiators of people not only just responsive to individuals but now with groups of people. I think that forever shifted what we were about. I think the spirit of it was described in Brown's monograph. For the longest time I thought that was his last name--Monograph. As a beginning student you know you don't have all this lingo. So we set off to the first ACPA conference to meet Browns

Monograph.

With the student development spirit being described in that monograph, I think our greatest strides have been made in a theoretical underpinning to the concepts. What does development look like during the college years? How does it happen from a variety of perspectives? What makes a difference and how can we somehow design whatever it is we do to get out of the way of this process and let it happen? When I went to graduate school, there was Chickering--and that was it! That was our sum understanding of college students.

Do you see any changes between the students enrolling in Master's program now and those ten years ago?

I haven't seen much change in the last ten years in the type of students, though I often wonder whether people are well prepared in terms of their undergraduate curriculum. I have had students who said they only wrote one paper as an undergraduate and the only means of assessing their work have been multiple choice tests. That disturbs me.

I have always described the "typical student" in this field as being a high E type in the Holland's vocational choice model. Our students tend to be enterprising, social, and artistic, versus conventional, realistic and investigative. They tend to be hands-on people. At least the ones who come to master's programs. So they come to our program and they are accommodators in terms of Kolb's model of learning style. They like hands on, jump in, and "grab a hold of" type of work. People at the master's level almost always have what others have described as "terminal volunteerism." They are doers. The more that they can do, the better they feel about themselves. They keep looking for opportunities to show people where they shine. And so the pendulum swings and they get overextended very easily. And then the academic work hits them broadside--it's not easy for them to balance that sometimes.

With regard to some of the projects you have been working on lately, could you describe that adult learners program at Bowling Green and what you are learning as the program develops?

I am learning a variety of things. First of all, when you look at Higher Education today, well over 40% of all students are over 25. Our assumptions about the bright, shining 18 year old students only account for about half of the students on campus these days. So I think we need to start learning about other types of students. Adult learners are no different from 18 year olds in some respects. I think that life transitions sort of lead people to these types of institutions. We legitimize that, for the 18 year old, life transition is becoming a young adult and that's okay. We are just beginning to legitimize transitions of other points in the life span. The 30s transition, the 40s transition, the 50s transition, and so on.

We're now beginning to see that those life transitions are also just as important as the young adults' life transition. These institutions are great places, full of resources, that are useful in helping people resolve those life transitions. So this isn't going to go away. We are going to see more and more people doing this. I expect that some day it will be perfectly normal that when someone turns 40, that someone will start asking them, "Where are you going to college next year?" I don't think it is far-fetched to think that will be the case someday. The difference between adults and traditional age students is

that adults tend to be experience rich but theory poor. And that is just the opposite problem of the traditional age student.

There is a new population out there so what we are trying to do at Bowling Green is to recognize that we need to be preparing practitioners who have special skills in working with those kinds of students. They complete the same curriculum as all of our other Master's students with the exception that they must complete nine additional hours focusing on who the adult learner is in terms of life span development, how do they learn? What are the student services that we need to meet their needs? They are returning adult students themselves.

I have learned from them that being a student is not their major life role. It is for an 18 year old and it is for traditional students. And very often things go on in their life for which they may or may not have control that drastically affects their status as students. Pregnancy, spouse moving, change in their economic situation, lots of things. It is a very volatile group in terms of enrollment and continuation. It's tough for them to be full-time students. So we're in the process of rethinking assumptions about what it means to be a graduate student. Is this "residential, full time model" the only model that we can use in terms of preparing practitioners?

What is the research that you are currently working on with George Kuh?

It is the "College Experiences Project." It starts with the simple premise that on the average, students spend maybe 30% of their time in the classroom and 70% of their time outside the classroom at most types of institutions. We have seen a lot of research and a lot of writing and thinking about the 30% of the time, the academic side, the classroom experience. What we are out to examine are the consequences of that 70% of the time. When you think about that, that is a tremendous resource that institutions can use in support of their institutional mission--the education of students. And we are out to find out what works. What makes the schools special?

We are looking at: Grinnell College, Iowa State University, Berea College, Earlham College, University of California-Davis, Stanford University, Wichita State University, University of North Carolina-Charlotte, Mt. Holyoke, Xavier University, (a historically black college in New Orleans), University of Alabama-Birmingham, and Evergreen State University in Washington.

What are some of your plans for the next ten to fifteen years?

There have been times when I wonder whether being an administrator is of interest to me, although I think I have that cured after three years of being a department chair--I got over that temptation. The distinction I keep in my mind in terms of being a faculty member and being an administrator is that as a faculty member I get paid for creating new ideas, and it doesn't matter whether they work; as an administrator, I get paid for making ideas work, it doesn't matter if they are always rational. If you look at my Myers-Briggs type, I am an ENTP. That's somewhat of a classical professor orientation. I like the world of ideas and I like asking questions and I use logic rather than valuing and feeling as my principle means for solving problems and so forth.

In helping graduate students become better professionals, how do the roles of the professor and the job supervisor differ?

I think the issue you are addressing is the training vs. education model. In applied fields our assumption is on how you prepare to be a professional, how you get trained.

You sit at the feet of the master and you see how he or she does this and you sort of put that in your memory and you do it that way. You take the best practices. The problem with that in my mind is that that's the purpose of training--to teach you to survive learning once. Only once. When we spend all of our time relying on current practitioners, what we are doing is catching up with the previous generation's experience. We aren't advancing. That previous experience is important but that's not the goal. A solid academic, theoretical background helps you to apply the underlying principles to that past experience which will allow you to anticipate or break through to new ways of approaching things. That's the distinction between education and training.

Education teaches you to survive unlearning and learning again. And we all are going to have to do that. Our field will never advance unless we have people who do those things. I tell our students at Bowling Green something different than that old saying, "experience is the best teacher." My approach is that "experience understood is even a better teacher." The role of theory and research is to help us understand that experience.

Jeff McColloch received his bachelor of science degree in political science from Stanford University in 1982 and has completed his first year in the college student personnel administration program. Next year he will be an Assistant Coordinator in McNutt Quadrangle. Jeff plans to pursue a career in student activities.

ETHICAL ISSUES IN COMPUTER-ASSISTED CAREER GUIDANCE

Susan M. Sgambelluri

The use of computer-assisted guidance is becoming increasingly prevalent in career counseling centers. DISCOVER, SIGI, GIS, C-LECT, CHOICES, Micro-SKILLS, and Career/College Scan are only a few of the tools currently available. Indeed, researchers and writers in the fields acknowledge and offer several reasons for the emergence of the "high-tech counseling office" (Childers, 1985; Eberly & Cech 1986; Sampson & Pyle, 1983).

Given the potential benefits for clients and counselors, many have concluded that artificial intelligence will soon become a vital supplement to human intelligence in clinical practice (Denton, 1987).

As Sampson and Pyle (1983) point out, however, "Microcomputer technology has the potential to augment as well as to undermine both the relationship between client and counselor and the client's growth, decision-making skills, and problem-solving abilities" (p. 17).

Given the potential problems of computer use in this setting, many authors and practitioners have turned their attention to the ethical issues involved in computer-administered counseling, testing and guidance. This paper will review and summarize discussion of ethical issues found in scholarly journals, describe progress made toward providing practitioners with concrete guidelines for computer use, and draw conclusions about remaining "need areas" in ethical standards for the field of computer-assisted career guidance.

Scholarly Discussions of Ethical Issues

Many ethical issues involved in computer-assisted guidance have been identified. Here, they fall into eight primary areas.

Client Expectations

The way in which an instrument is marketed and/or the way in which it is presented to potential clients can leave them with unrealistic expectations about its ability to aid in career exploration (Nagy, 1987). Sales slogans such as "Pick the right career for you!" or "Get all the information you need in one location!" present an inaccurate view of the instrument's capabilities, encourage unrealistic client expectations, and unnecessarily complicate the counselor's task.

Software Issues

The available software packages are of varying quality. Some may have "bugs" including career information that rapidly becomes outdated and useless (Childers, 1985) and test interpretation algorithms that produce detailed, comprehensive, but potentially inaccurate profiles (Eberly & Cech, 1986). In addition, the best attempts to select the optimal software are often complicated by misleading or biased software reviews (Childers, 1985).

Client Screening Procedures

First, a client's unfamiliarity with computers or an otherwise insufficient level of computer literacy may adversely affect the results of a test or search since the client may be unable to make optimal use of the instrument. Second, counselors must be cautious