
JOHN ORR CRITES (1928–2007): IN MEMORIAM

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John Orr Crites, one of the leading vocational psychologists of the 20th century, succumbed to pneumonia on March 15, 2007. With his passing, counselling psychology lost an exemplar of its scientist-practitioner model. Jack's scholarly contributions and leadership substantially advanced vocational psychology both as a distinct discipline in applied psychology and as a substratum of the profession of counselling psychology.

While possessing a brilliant mind, Jack did not climb to the pinnacle of his discipline alone. He always credited his teachers and mentors for guiding and smoothing his ascent. Jack occasionally told the story of how as a freshman at Princeton University he received a poor grade in an English composition course. The professor then invited Jack to his house for tutoring. Professor Carlos Baker, the preeminent Hemingway scholar, taught Crites how to write simply and directly. He also insisted that Jack develop Ernest Hemingway's habit of writing a paragraph every day, beginning

each morning by crafting 'one true sentence.' In 1950, Jack graduated *magna cum laude* from Princeton as a history major. He then joined the Air Force, serving for two years as Chief of Career Guidance at Barksdale Air Force Base in Louisiana.

When Jack returned home to New York City, his occupational choice was at issue. At first he sought a position in personnel work but failed to secure one. While seeking ideas about which occupation to pursue, Jack happened to read an article in the *Lady's Home Journal* written by President William Fletcher Russell of Teachers College, Columbia University. Moved by the article entitled 'Why Your Child Should Become a Teacher,' Jack the next day went to Teachers College to enrol in courses to become a history professor. Immediately unhappy with his choice, Jack asked a professor who taught personnel psychology for guidance, and guide him he did. As they talked, Albert Thompson (Division 17 President 1962–1963) learned of Jack's military experience and invited Jack to enrol in his two-year certificate program in personnel psychology. In due course, Jack met Al's great friend Donald Super (Division 17 President 1951–1952). Don became Jack's doctoral sponsor, mentor, and life-long friend. While studying psychology at Teachers College, Jack's counselling style was shaped by his practicum supervisor, Joseph Edward Shoben (Division 17 President 1958–1959). Shoben's book with Laurence Shaffer on the *Psychology of Adjustment*

(1956) would also strongly influence Jack's model of work adjustment.

While completing his doctoral studies at Teachers College, Jack served as a staff member on Super's Career Pattern Study, authoring with Don a book entitled *Vocational Development: A Framework for Research*. Jack used Career Pattern Study data to write a dissertation that examined whether ego-strength as measured with the *Rorschach Inkblot Test* related to interest patterning on the *Strong Vocational Interest Blank*. When he found it did not, the disappointing results turned Jack's attention from psychodynamic formulations to behavioural analysis of vocational development. After graduating in June 1957, Jack became a counselling psychologist and lecturer in educational psychology at the University of Texas. He returned to New York City that summer to be a symposiast in the American Psychological Association (APA) program honouring Harry Dexter Kitson, Donald Super's mentor. Jack experienced a satisfying symmetry and a sense of closure when he presented his final APA address at the symposium memorialising Donald Super during the 1995 convention in New York City.

While at Texas, Jack and Don began work on the second edition of *Appraising Vocational Fitness* which appeared in 1962. That book, originally published by Super in 1949, stood as the definitive textbook on career assessment for 25 years and continues to be well worth reading today. Although the test descriptions are outdated, the conceptual framework remains important. For example, the format for conceptualising a case by differentiating person appraisal from problem appraisal remains vital, and the section distinguishing four types of interest assessment should be core knowledge for every career counsellor. After one year at Texas, Jack moved to the University of Iowa as senior counsellor and assistant professor of psychology.

Jack's years at Iowa (1958–1971) were highly productive. He published 38 book chapters and journal articles. He served as co-editor (1961–1972) of the Test Review section in the *Journal of Counseling Psychology*. In 1963, the American Board of Professional Psychology named him a diplomate in counselling psychology and in 1967 he attained the rank of professor. From 1963 to 1971, he headed the graduate training program in counselling psychology while simultaneously directing the University Counselling Service (1964–1971). The counselling service staff—

including Leonard Goodstein, Arthur Heilburn, and James Stephenson—made a national reputation for the quantity and quality of their research publications. Highly skilled as counsellors, the staff also created an innovative approach to group career counselling using the transactional analysis model.

Jack's research program at Iowa concentrated on the measurement of vocational maturity. In 1965, he published the first paper-and-pencil measure of career choice readiness, then called the *Vocational Development Inventory* and since 1973 called the *Career Maturity Inventory (CMI)*. As a measure of attitudes toward the career choice process, the CMI was widely used during the heyday of the career education movement and has appeared in over 400 published research studies.

Writing one paragraph a day for ten years, Jack in 1969 published his masterwork: *Vocational Psychology: The study of vocational behavior and its development*. A sabbatical year (1966–1967) at the Harvard University Center for Research in Careers with David Tiedeman (Division 17 President 1965–1966) and Ann Roe had accelerated Jack's work on his decade-long project to further codify and define vocational psychology as a field of scientific inquiry. In addition to presenting a critical analysis and integration of the literature, the book clearly differentiated vocational psychology as a discipline in applied psychology from the profession of career counselling. Half of the book focused on vocational choice, while the other half focused on work adjustment. Inspired by the Psychology Department's Friday Night Discussion Group about logical positivism, Jack focused on vocational behaviour as the unit of analysis, not occupation or career. The members of the Friday Night group, led by Kenneth Spence and Gustav Bergmann, had propelled Iowa to prominence as a centre of theoretical psychology.

In 1971, Jack moved to the University of Maryland as a professor of psychology. This move coincided with his two-year presidency of Division 17 (1971–1973), the first year as president pro tempore, when the elected president was unable to fill the position, and the next year as president. During his decade at Maryland, Jack lectured widely on the use of the CMI. His scholarly interest turned from vocational psychology to career counselling. In 1981, he published his fourth book, entitled *Career Counseling: Models, methods, and materials*. He continued to publish articles and book chapters at a high rate, and spent the academic year

1977–1978 on sabbatical as a Visiting Scholar at the Institute for Personality Assessment and Research at the University of California, Berkeley.

Jack devoted the last decade of his professional life to program building and mentoring. In 1981, he moved to Kent State University where he was recruited to form the Career Research and Development Laboratory. Appointed as a Research Professor, Jack's main role was to mentor assistant professors in the research process. Collaborating with Louise Fitzgerald and Sandra Shulman, he established an APA-approved counseling psychology program at Kent State. Having achieved the goals he set for himself at Kent State, Jack in 1985 moved to Northwestern University with the goal of securing APA accreditation for its counselling psychology program, which he did before he retired in 1989. Jack delivered his final professional presentation in 1997 during the third biennial conference of the Society for Vocational Psychology, a section in the APA Division of Counseling Psychology. Jack's 1997 master lecture on four types of interest assessment, along with his 1995 presentation at the symposium memorialising Donald Edwin Super, may be heard on <http://www.vocopher.com/JohnCrites.cfm>.

Jack retired to Boulder, Colorado in 1989 and enjoyed his retirement years spent with his wife Norma McGee. He revised the *CMI* and attended a few conferences but mainly read Hemingway and traveled with Norma. To the end, J.O.C., as he liked to sign his letters, appreciated the help he received

from his mentors and the fellowship he found in Division 17. The science of vocational psychology and the profession of counselling, in return, have benefited from his scholarship, instruction, and leadership. His colleagues and friends say goodbye, in the spirit of Hemingway, with this 'one true sentence'—We will remember you, J.O.C.

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