

Talk given by C. F. Warrick at CPJ
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First of all I would like to give just a very quick general background of the Career Pattern Study, the way that we are working and what we are doing. We started off about three years ago in Middletown, New York. We took all of the boys in the high school in the ninth grade and all the boys in the Junior High School in the eighth grade, a total of 280, split almost in half between the two grades and began working with them. Middletown High School, Middletown. . . rather is a town of approximately 50,000 or 60,000 in the town with a good deal of farm population around. Some forty-five - what is it, Ray, 60 miles from New York City? "Seventy-two." Seventy-two - Ray drives the car (fades out)- So this will give you a little idea of the basis of this thing.

Now the concept that we have come to work with in Career Pattern Study - and it is a term that is surprisingly enough is not used in the literature or at least is not used very often---I could not find any special references to it---was vocational maturity. This is surprising because you find all sorts of maturities, emotional, intellectual, physical, etc. etc., but no vocational maturity. So we picked this term to use as a possible bag into which we could put our measurements and whatever else we collected from the boys into some - we would collect all of this material (inaudible because of coughing in background) under one. . . and we hit on vocational maturity, which we define as the ability to make vocational decisions and adjustments which are appropriate to a given stage of general development.

In the past, guidance people have very little depending upon and using materials from other resources and other skills. We have not drawn upon social psychology, anthropology and some of the other disciplines. Our operations in the Career Pattern Study are an attempt to bring into the material that we are collecting on these boys materials that will be useful and would normally be collected in

a study that would include sociological principles, developmental principles, etc. We feel that vocational maturity would be measured along some time continuum ~~as~~ of vocational development which would be a phase of general development. And we feel that this special study because of the emphasis . . . on work in our culture. It is the ability we feel to use effectively the experiences which are appropriate to the present life stage in so far as these are related to vocational choice and adjustment. It is best defined (perhaps in terms of the approach to the techniques used in vocational orientation and choice in terms of the specificity of the occupational goal. What we have done, what we are trying to do - I have to point out that as we get involved in the study we are continually changing things moving with what might come out in seminars or ⁱⁿ general discussions among the staff. We have not pinned anything down definitely at the present time. We are still in the feeling around stage, in the ~~stage~~ ^{stage} where we are analyzing data to try and find out exactly how it will fit into our concept. We have broken vocational maturity down into some five criteria. I think that if you have gotten one of our handouts on the first page you can run down through those five. Readiness to Choose, Consistency of Specific Purposes, Crystallization of Traits, Information and Planning, and The Wisdom of Vocational Preferences; and again we subdivided those into the A,B,C,D's and so on that you find there under the . . .; and within each of those subheadings we have again broken them down into points of what we call measurable units of one sort or another to help us give some sort of scoring system to these boys on a vocational maturity. However, we are trying to get away from simply scores and the results of tests; and this is where we feel that we are adding something to what has already been done in guidance as far as prediction in choice is concerned. Our study depends quite heavily upon biographical material which we ~~feel~~ have collected in ~~interview~~ interviews. But let me leave that until a few minutes later when I go into more specific details of the study itself. We hope that we will be able to work up a profile on each of the boys at each stage of their development, a profile of vocational maturity which will - these criteria will give us

some sort of profile much like that of, say the Strong or the MMPI's which the counselor might be able to use. A glance at this profile, giving him a feeling for the vocational development at a particular stage.

Let me swing over now to what we have done and this will be something that perhaps you can work against to something very specific. We started three years ago, actually four years ago when the first seminars were held and the first ideas began to develop about such a study. After the preliminary arrangements had been made and Middletown decided on, Dr. Super and three of his assistants went to Middletown and lived there for a year. During that time they tested and interviewed the boys in the eighth and nine grades. The lists of test at that time ran to about twenty. (I don't know if you have the actual list or not -) Yes. These tests are on the second page which included as you can see, glancing down through there, tests of intellectual ability, interests, tests - sociometric devices, some more of ^a psychological tests, such as the TAT and Incomplete Sentences. The tests were not the only things that we were interested in. Our interests as I previously mentioned were on the interviews. We had with each of the boys four interviews a piece, ~~each~~ each interview running about thirty-five minutes, the length of the school period. I think the interviews again are outlined on the third page. These interviews included school activities (one interview), out-of-school activities, family activities, family relationships, and then the fourth with planning. We were not interested in just asking what they were going to do; we were interested also in how they felt about these things, what their relationships with their peer group or with adults in these activities were. We wanted to get the feelings of the boys. We were actually more interested in the feelings than the raw number of activities participated in.

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We had interviews with/parents of each of the boys, both parents if possible and usually the mother when it was impossible to get hold of the father. These in-

interviews included the perception of the boys by their parents, the parents' feelings about the boy's plans and what the parents hoped the boy might get into and then information on the family background, what the family is doing as a group and as individuals; where the family had come from what sort of jobs the parents had in the past, what jobs the grandparents had had, materials on the values that the parents had about work and about life in general. In addition to these things we also did a socio-economic study of the town itself and more specifically of the parents and families of our boys. We used the Warner method in rating the jobs and rating the houses and the living conditions of the parents. One of the final things that we did with the community survey of the occupational possibilities in Middletown, what were the normal entering jobs, how fast did boys or men move ahead, what could they expect, what were the . . . that they could expect to get into. We attempted to touch, and I think we did a pretty good job of it, to get in touch with the owners or managers of every industry, every business in town, so that we had a pretty complete occupational description of Middletown and of the jobs that were there.

What we are trying to do in all of this is set forth in Don Super's article in the first issue of Counseling Psychology, so far as the theoretical background is concerned. We hope to be able to pick up themes running through the lives of these boys and men. We plan the study to last for twenty years which will follow our people through until they are well established in their jobs so that we can pick up the things that do run through the lives of these kids, not simply the occupation themes but also psychological themes; the things that relate perhaps to job selection and later job adjustment. It may be in this area where our greatest contribution may lie. We feel that it may be that we will find certain people have one sort of theme running all the way through from their early school experience, jumping around, from one thing to another, say, which carries over to their occupational experience. You may find that there are themes of stick-to-iveness of sticking to the job, not only on the job itself but also earlier in their school

experiences. This is the sort of things that we are attempting to get at. We've just come back from our first follow-up-in Middletown-of the boys who were formerly in the ninth grade. At this time we had given them almost the same battery of tests. We dropped out a few of those - you can tell by the stars on the second page again, those tests which have been given to the twelfth graders since these boys are now seniors, looking forward to moving out either out in the world of work or going into the service or continuing with their education. We have interviews for each of these boys, once for an eighty minute interview, again again returning to the main headings, in a sense, that we followed with the eighth and ninth grade boys. This time attempting to get them to reconstruct for us their lives through high school so that we can get a better picture of what it was like for them in high school, what were the things that most interested them, what were the things that they got most from, how did their friendship patterns change, and that sort of thing. We will try to get them again in about three more years when those who go to college are just about ready to go out either into the service then or in the world of work, but some boys will have become established in some pattern of work where other boys who have gone into the service or just about ready to complete their fourth year in the military and will be looking forward to the continuing or coming out and going to work. Again after we will have repeated contacts with these boys, about three more at approximately five year intervals after this time. For the moment we are exactly sure just how we will get in touch with them or what will be our procedures. These are the things that have to wait more-or-less until the circumstances arise so that you can get the feel of the situation and try to find out just how you going to go about things. Up until a year we were not definite exactly what sort of interviews we would hold with the boys in the twelfth grade, what sort of tests we would give, would give exactly the same batteries - these things develop along the line. We are in the feeling stage and consequently there are no definite answers out as yet. I have had quite

a number of people to ask me when are we going to publish or get something out. This is the sort of thing that has to wait until the people in your study develop. We hope to have our first monograph out this Winter, but that is besides the point. I think that I have about reached the end of my string.