

## Gifted Children

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# Book Review: Models of Counseling Gifted Children, Adolescents, and Young Adults, edited by Mendaglio, S., and Peterson, J. S. (2007)

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### *Models of Counseling Gifted Children, Adolescents, and Young Adults.*

By Mendaglio, S. & Peterson, J.S. (Eds.) (2007) Waco, TX: Prufrock Press.

#### Review by Rita R. Culross

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Gifted education as a field is rich in resources to assist teachers of the gifted and other school personnel in how to identify, characterize, and plan instruction for gifted and talented students. There is also a growing literature on the social and emotional development of gifted students to assist parents and teachers in addressing the affective needs of the gifted. Beyond the field of gifted education, however, knowledge about working with gifted persons in counseling situations is less available. Among CACREP-accredited programs, e.g., only 62% included information on developmental concerns and counseling issues related to students of high ability (Peterson, 2005). Similarly, few clinical or counseling psychology programs prepare their graduates to work with the gifted. Although the American Psychological Association's Center for Gifted Education Policy has begun sponsoring continuing education workshops and professional literature targeted at informing practicing psychologists about people with gifts, few books are available that integrate counseling and giftedness in a single publication. Into this void comes *Models of Counseling Gifted Children, Adolescents, and Young Adults*.

Mendaglio & Peterson's book is an excellent addition to the professional literature on counseling the gifted. The book is divided into three sections: 1) two initial chapters introducing the book and providing an overview of research related to counseling the gifted, 2) a series of chapters presenting various models for counseling the gifted, and 3) a final integrative chapter comparing and contrasting the models in the book. All of the chapters in the models' section use a similar structure, including conceptions of giftedness and personality, an explanation of the model presented, and an application section in which a case example is included. There is great variety among the models discussed with developmental, systems, family therapy, and other models represented. The application

section is a particularly strong feature of the book, as case examples of clients who are gifted are presented, often with dialogues from client sessions, interspersed with comments by the practitioners. Most of the contributors have had experience in counseling gifted individuals. Unlike most counseling texts, however, the models they present go beyond familiar theories to present the unique models that have evolved in those contributors' practices.

The challenge in edited books is often what to include vs. what to leave out. One particular perspective that is missing is that of diversity. While Kerr and Thomas et al. do discuss some issues of cultural difference, there are no case studies of such students. Likewise, there is some discussion in Peterson's chapter on group work with gifted students, but a chapter written from the perspective of group counseling would be extremely helpful to school counselors or others who work in group settings. Another addition that might be helpful would be a case that deals more explicitly with career counseling issues.

The book is suitable for courses dealing specifically with counseling the gifted, although a supplementary book of readings in the social and emotional development of the gifted might be needed in some cases. There is really no book on the market at this time comparable to Mendaglio & Peterson's, but perhaps the book's release will result in additional titles about this topic.

In 1981, John Feldhusen, as President of the National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC), appointed NAGC Board Members George Betts and Jim Webb to found NAGC's Division of Counseling and Guidance because of a growing recognition of the affective needs of gifted children. Some 25+ years later the field has its first real book to assist those in the helping professions conceptualize counseling issues with the gifted. It's about time! ♦

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## References

- Peterson, J. S. (2005). Survey of CACREP-accredited school-counseling programs regarding attention to giftedness. Unpublished raw data.