

The history of the guidance movement in the united states

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The History of the Guidance Movement in the United States Just like most professions and occupations, the job of a counselor emerged out of the human need. As society evolved, the need for counseling emerged and gained in importance over time. Guidance and counseling are deeply rooted in psychology. Much of what is used in counseling was developed out of the various psychological perspectives thought of and coined by various psychologists. One of the most notable psychologists that greatly contributed to the development of guidance and counseling was Sigmund Freud. Freud introduced the psychoanalytic theory which up until today is used by many psychologists and counselors. His contribution was so great that he was considered as the father of psychology.

In the United States, the history and development of guidance and counseling were influenced by various events and personalities. Before guidance and counseling were formally introduced in the country, the formative years began in the latter half of the 18th century. During this period, there became more humane care for the mentally disturbed and greater awareness in the application of treating human behavior. (Myrick, 2003) The formal history of guidance and counseling in the United States dates back to 1908 when Frank Parsons established the Boston Vocational Bureau. The objective of Parsons in establishing such an institution was to provide the youth with vocational assistance in school. Because of his contributions, Parsons was named as the father of the guidance movement. According to Blocher, "The Guidance Movement developed from the need to help these early school leavers develop a rational plan with which to begin their careers." (2000) Guidance and counseling in the United States began as

vocational counseling. The primary objective of counseling during such time was to help students determine their career of choice and future plans.

Another influential person in the development of guidance and counseling was Jesse B. Davis. Davis was considered the father of school counseling.

Davis introduced vocational and moral guidance as a curriculum into an English course. This was believed to be the first systematic guidance program in public schools (Cobia & Henderson, 2003). If Davis' focus was on school counseling, Eli Weaver, in 1908, looked into the need for guidance and counseling in a wider area, the city of New York. Having seen the need for such, Weaver organized guidance services for the city. (Cobia & Henderson, 2003)

In as much as the development of guidance and counseling were products of the initiatives of individuals, various historical events factored in as well. The onset of World War I created the need for the military to carefully pick the soldiers that would be sent to war. As such, the military adopted the first intelligence tests developed by Alfred Binet and Theodore Simon. These tests were used on draftees for WWI to determine if they were suited for it or not. Such intelligence tests were called the Army Alpha Test. (Gibson & Mitchell, 2003) After the war; the use of achievement testing in schools increased most notably beginning in the 1920s. World War II and its aftermath further emphasized the need for psychological testing.