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The Journal of Mind and Behavior
Winter 1992, Volume 13, Number 1
Page 109-110
ISSN 0271-0137

Assertive Behavior: Theory, Research, and Training. Richard F. Rakos.
London & New York: Routledge, 1991, 248 pages, \$19.95 paper.

Reviewed by T.L. Brink, Crafton Hills College

This book is part of the International Series on Communication Skills, edited by Owen Hargie. This particular paperback monograph is written by Rakos, a Cleveland State University professor. His approach is objective, admitting that assertiveness training was over-touted as a cure-all in the 1970s, but it remains a useful tool.

The style is authoritative, though easy to follow. Rakos has a knack for the appropriate use of footnotes to keep the flow of his writing and yet preserve a high level of extended analysis for those readers who require it.

The content can be best described as a comprehensive review of research, without detailed methodological critiques. Rakos begins by reviewing the philosophical underpinnings of his topic (which he identifies with Socratic Rationalism and John Dewey's Pragmatism): an emphasis on reason over emotion, effective decision-making skills, acceptable interpersonal behavior. Rakos ties assertiveness training to the behaviorist and cognitive traditions within clinical psychology. Then Rakos goes on to examine issues concerned with conceptualization of assertiveness (linguistic and operational meanings). The bulk of the book considers specific variables (sub-cultural, client, therapist, situational) which impact assertive behavior or training.

With over 700 references, and both subject and author indexes, the target readership would be researchers in the area of assertive behavior and assertiveness training, but there is much that counselors and helping professionals can glean. For example, Rakos emphasizes the need to assess each patient functionally and comprehensively, and reprints various schedules and inventories. There is also a list of self-help books, audios, videos, games, and trainer manuals.

This work is essential for libraries serving graduate programs in psychology, counseling and related disciplines. It should be the starting point for anyone doing a dissertation on the topic.

ACTION AND PERFORMANCE: MODELS AND TESTS.
CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE QUANTITATIVE PSYCHOLOGY
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POZNAN STUDIES
IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE SCIENCES AND THE HUMANITIES
vol. 14, Amsterdam-Atlanta 1990

Publisher:

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