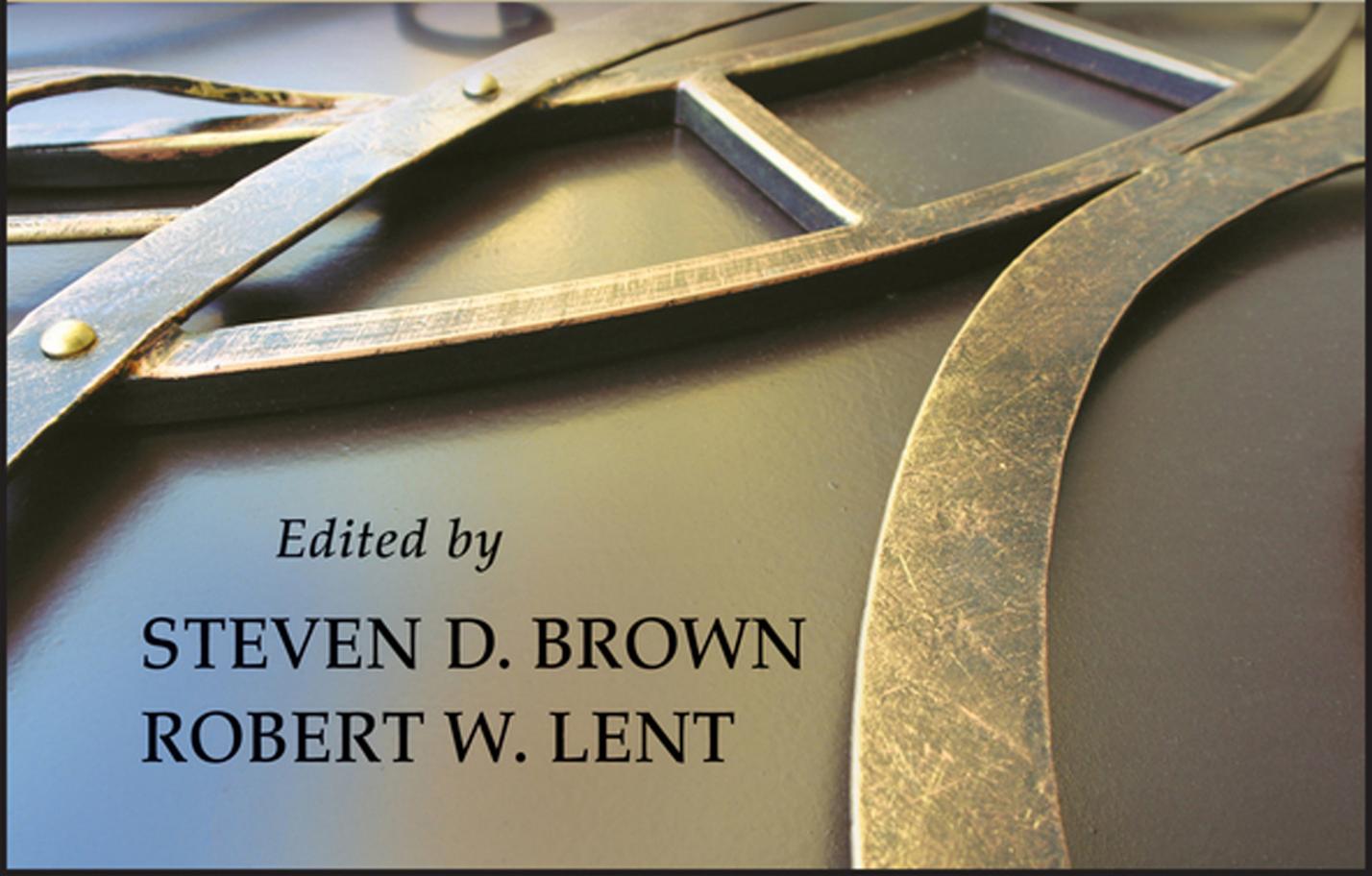


SECOND EDITION

# Career Development *and* Counseling

Putting Theory and Research to Work



*Edited by*

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## CHAPTER 6

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# Career Construction Theory and Practice

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**T**HE THEORY OF CAREER construction explains the interpretive and interpersonal processes through which individuals construct themselves, impose direction on their vocational behavior, and make meaning of their careers. Intended for use in a multicultural society and global economy, the conceptual framework provides a contemporary explanation of careers and informs a model for career counseling. To accomplish its goals, career construction theory addresses how individuals build careers through personal constructivism and social constructionism. It asserts that individuals construct representations of reality, yet they do not construct reality itself. Furthermore, the theory views careers from a contextualist perspective, one that conceptualizes development as driven by adaptation to an environment rather than by maturation of inner structures. Viewing careers from constructionist and contextual perspectives concentrates attention on self-construction. With self-construction central to the theory, I first consider how people make themselves into who they are and then describe contemporary perspectives on career. This discussion leads to three central perspectives on self that form the foundations of career construction theory: self as actor, self as agent, and self as author. I then elaborate on these three perspectives and explain how they structure a scheme for career intervention and inform a model for career construction counseling. A case study demonstrating the counseling model concludes the chapter.