Integrating Theory, Research, and Practice: Lessons Learned from the Evolution of Vocational Psychology

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Goals

- Explore theory, research, and practice nexus from an historical perspective.
- Employ critical psychology and psychology-of-working perspectives as guides to this historical analysis.
- Develop an argument that an inclusive historical perspective needs to encompass macro-level analyses.
Historical analyses are social constructions.
An inclusive psychology of working perspective includes all those who work and who want to work.
Consistent with MacLachlan’s macro-psychology perspective, I will focus on the following sorts of questions:
“What sort of social systems are likely to promote a sense of worth, inclusion and participation, and how can such social systems be created and maintained?”
I believe that economic affordance and constraints have influenced individuals and, more broadly, our professional direction with respect to theory, research, and practice.
Macro-level influences

- Automation and industrialization
- Expanding work volition
The Social Construction of the Post World War II Era

This was the period of the greatest economic growth of the 20th century.
- During the 1950s, the economy grew by 37%.

This was also the period the greatest growth of career choice and development theories.
- Roe
- Super
- Holland
- Dawis and Lofquist
The Margins of our Discourse
Embracing our past as we move forward

• Think outside of the intellectual box
• Develop inclusive theories:
  • For example, the Psychology of Working Theory (Duffy et al.)
• Let’s not create walls—rather, let’s build bridges among theoretical perspectives.
• Similarly, let’s develop integrative research and practice communities that will seek to address the massive problems that face people in locating and sustaining decent work.