

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

David L. Blustein

Boston College

Email address: David.Blustein@bc.edu

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.

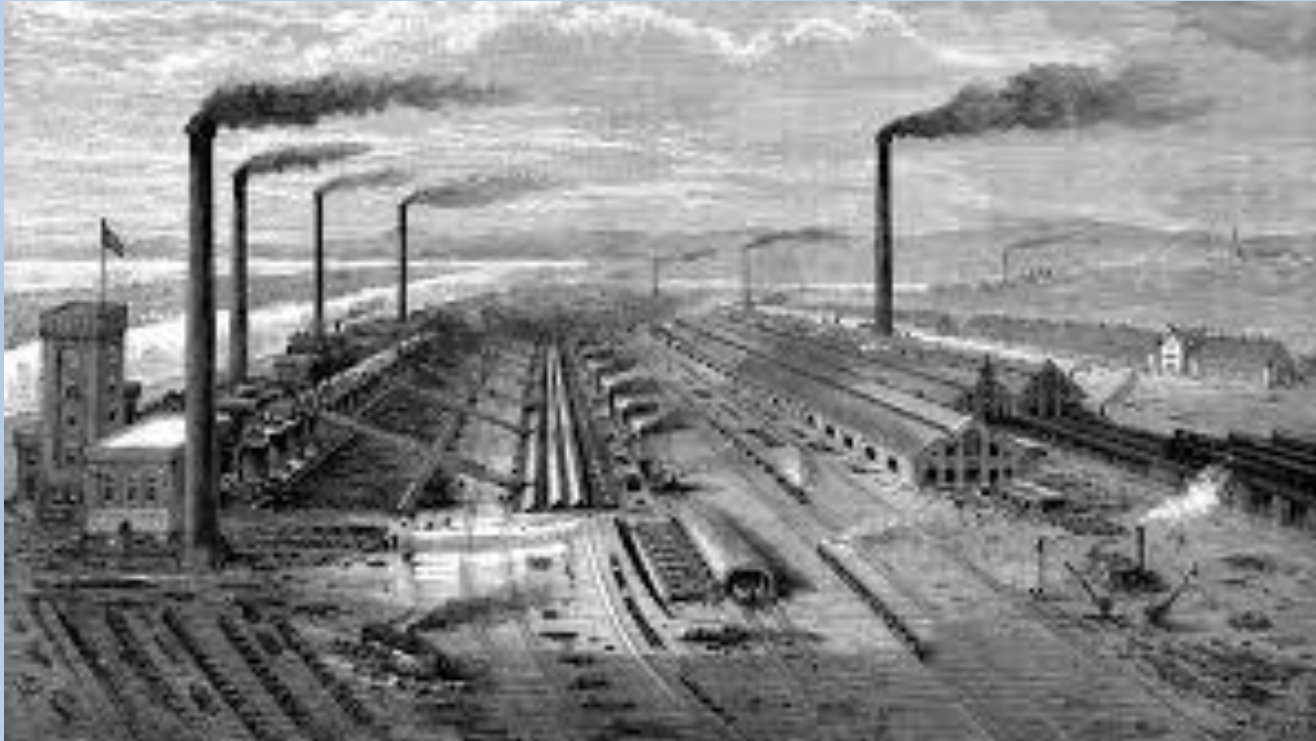


Assumptions

- 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

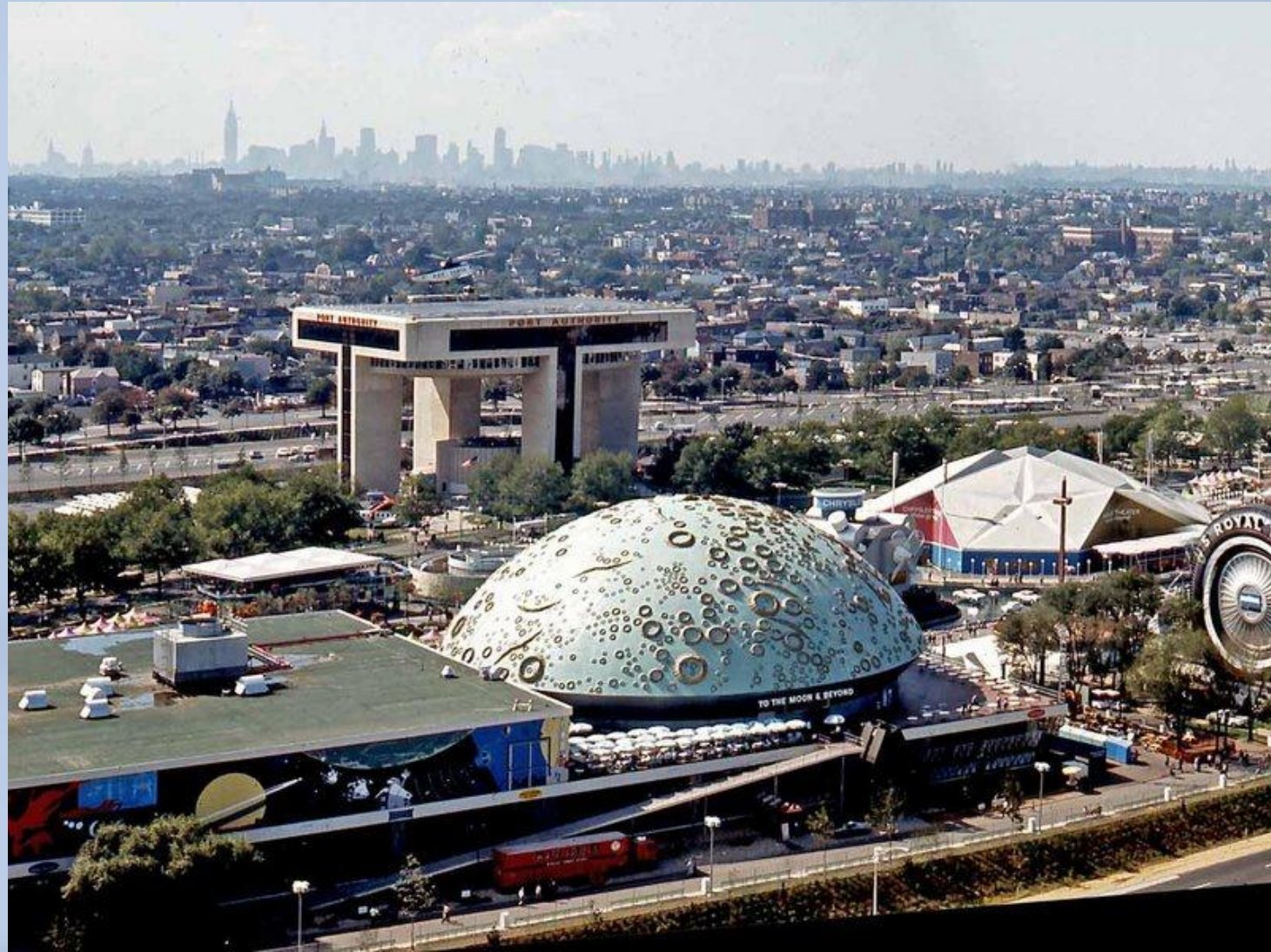
- Automation and industrialization
- Expanding work volition



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 New York World's Fair: 1964-65: The Great Big Beautiful Tomorrow



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.