NOTA EDITORIAL

A Revista Portuguesa de Pedagogia e a Psychologica quiseram, com esta edição especial conjunta, associar-se às comemorações dos 30 anos da Faculdade de Psicologia e de Ciências da Educação da Universidade de Coimbra, enquanto parceiras neste caminho de excelência na investigação, no ensino e no serviço. Em breve estas revistas iniciarão novos rumos estratégicos de afirmação, um dos quais será a sua internacionalização. Esta edição espelha já o reconhecimento que a Psicologia, as Ciências da Educação e o Serviço Social da nossa Faculdade colhe nas mais amplas latitudes.

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Re-viewing scientific models of career as social constructions

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In the flexible organizations and fluid societies of the 21st century, the digital revolution has changed how many people work and manage their careers. To address new and emerging needs, vocational psychologists and career counselors need to examine how they help individuals manage their work lives. This self-examination may include a “re-view” of career theory and techniques envisioned from different perspectives and elaborated from new premises. For example, the modern idea of actualizing a core self that already exists within a person served career research and practice well during the second half of the 20th century. However, for careers in the 21st century that idea might be replaced with the postmodern idea that an essential self does not exist a priori; instead, constructing a self is a life project (Savickas, in press). This constructionist view considers self to be a story, not a substance defined by a list of traits. Needless to state, self-actualization and self-construction offer fundamentally different perspectives on and prospects for career counseling.

To be clear, the constructionist ideas in this article build on and venerate the contributions of the positivist perspective exemplified by the contributions of Holland’s (1997) differential psychology and Super’s (1990) developmental psychology. Yet, they emerge from a constructionist perspective that emphasizes narrative psychology (Savickas, 2005). The traditional theories of Holland and Super are neither true nor false; rather, they substantiate a set of practices constructed to organize the work of vocational guidance and career education. Because of their significance and usefulness, these influential theories should be sustained. However, counselors must remember that the theories were constructed for use in stable societies that encouraged individuals to plan and then develop predictable career trajectories. The theories were not designed to address the career concerns of mobile workers.

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