A Revista Portuguesa de Pedagogia e a Psychologica quisem, 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.

Isabel Festas, Editora Revista Portuguesa de Pedagogia
Eduardo Santos, Editor Psychologica

Versão integral disponível em digitalis.uc.pt
The evolution of a new discourse for vocational psychology

Mary Sue Richardson

How we think and how we talk about the work we do in vocational psychology structures, organizes and focuses this work in profound and powerful ways. To change, in any kind of fundamental way, the way we think and talk about our field has significant consequences. In this essay I would like to trace the evolution of how I have been thinking and talking about vocational psychology in the course of my professional life, delineating the major influences that have shaped the direction that my work has taken. This work can be roughly broken down into three phases characterized by changes in language and discourse: from career to work, from work to work and relationships, and the elaboration of work to refer specifically to market work and personal care work. In describing the first two of these changes below, I refer to changes having to do with language. A more explicit understanding of language as discourse becomes significant in the third phase.

From career to work

The first phase spanned many years from my doctoral dissertation work at Teachers College, Columbia University to my paper on Work in Peoples Lives (Richardson, 1993), years in which, although my dissertation was on women’s career development, my focus primarily turned to feminism, psychology of women, and psychoanalysis, with little emphasis on vocational psychology beyond the vocational courses I taught at New York University. The doctoral seminar in vocational development, in particular, provided the slow cooker for helping to shift my thinking from career to work, with gender consciousness, in general, the key ingredient. Other key ingredients were standpoint theory and an historical understanding of the ways in which the language of vocational choice and career development reflected the political ideology of the times. Standpoint theory, an epistemology espoused by feminist philosophers such as Harding (1991) and Haraway (1997), was critical for a generation of feminist scholars.