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Mark Savickas

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Savickas has established himself as the global leader in research in the field of Career Counseling. His research has been published in every major international journal in the field of Counseling Psychology, he is by far the most prolific and significant author in his field and he has published a vast array of ground-breaking scholarly contributions in all the leading international journals in the field of Counseling Psychology. His stature in the field of Counseling Psychology is evidenced by his election to the office of President, Counseling Psychology Division, International Association for Applied Psychology (IAAP) but also to multiple other positions.

Our opening outline sets the framework for some of Savickas' more specific research accomplishments, which will now be delineated.

Mark L. Savickas is professor of family and community medicine and chair emeritus of the Behavioral Sciences Department at the Northeast Ohio Medical College in the United States. He earned his doctorate from Kent State University in 1975, before licensure requirements dictated the curriculum. Based at Kent State University, he was able to visit and study with leaders of vocational psychology such as Donald E. Super, John O. Crites, and John L. Holland rather than just reading their work. Super and Holland, who worked in different paradigms, sponsored his dissertation research under the direction of Glenn A. Saltzman. That study investigated the hypothesis that the developmental construct of career choice readiness related highly to the personality construct of consistency. The project set Savickas on a career path in which integration of theories and convergence of constructs play a prominent role. He repeatedly researched the relation between the two dominant and most useful models of vocational behavior, namely, the differential psychology model of John L. Holland with the developmental psychology model of Donald E. Super. This research and reflection produced 10 authored or edited books (many of which are generally regarded as classics in the field), 40 book chapters, 100 articles, three psychometric inventories, and 175 papers at conferences.

Savickas has received the highest awards given by the Society for Counseling Psychology, the Society of Vocational Psychology, the European Society for Vocational Designing and Career Counseling, and the National Career Development Association. He is a fellow in the Association for Psychological Science, the American Counseling Association, the National Career Development Association, and the Clinical Psychology Division in the American Psychological Association. Savickas served three-year terms as a visiting professor in the Department of Organizational Behavior in the School of Business at Loughborough University, United Kingdom; visiting professor at the Vrije Universiteit Brussels (Belgium), and visiting professor in the Faculty of Education and Psychology at the University of Lisbon in Portugal. Moreover, he received honorary doctorates from the University of Lisbon (Portugal) and the University of Pretoria (South Africa). These awards testify to and celebrate his single-handed reshaping of the face of career psychology in our time (Maree, 2013, 2016, 2019).

Savickas has presented more than 500 lectures and workshops to professional groups in 16 countries. To share teaching materials such as tests and videos, he set up a website, Vocopher.com, as a collaboratory for faculty who teach vocational psychology. As an adjunct professor at Kent State University since 1975, he has taught career counseling to 5,000 students and sponsored the doctoral dissertations of 32 students. In addition, he has had teaching appointments in the Psychology Departments at Vrije University (Belgium) and the University of Lisbon (Portugal), in the Department of Organizational Behavior at Loughborough University (England), and the Department of Educational Psychology at the University of Pretoria (South Africa).

From 1991 to 1998, Savickas served as editor-in-chief of *Career Development Quarterly* and from 1999 to 2016 he served as editor-in-chief for the *Journal of Vocational Behavior*. During those years, he also served on 22 editorial boards for journals in 12 countries. He used these posts to further the careers of new professionals seeking to publish their first manuscripts as well as craft special issues to highlight problems and possibilities in vocational, industrial, and organizational psychology. He also leveraged his positions in professional organizations to foster the career development of new professionals and assistant professors. In 1987 he founded the Vocational Psychology and Career Intervention Special Interest Group (SIG) in the Counseling Psychology Division (17) of the American Psychological Association, leading it for nine years until it became the Society for Vocational Psychology. Under his leadership from 1990 to 1995 that group sponsored seminars in Belgium, Canada, and Portugal.

Savickas served in 2003 as founding Vice-President for the Counseling Psychology Division (16) and from 2010 to 2014 served the Division as President. One of his presidential initiatives was try to reunite the two wings of vocational psychology, namely, researchers who study adolescent career development and researchers who study adult career development. As part of this effort, Kerr Inkson and Savickas (2012) edited the four-volume set entitled *Major Works in Career Studies* that contained 79 articles selected because of their exceptional impact and influence and written by members of the two groups.

During the first half of his career, Savickas studied individual differences in vocational behavior, always attempting to integrate Super's model of readiness with Holland's model of resemblance. He examined the convergence of career development variables to individual difference variables such as decidedness, interests, identity, and time perspective.

At midcareer, he took a major step by organizing with Robert W. Lent (1994), the first Vocational SIG conference on the topic of Convergence in Career Theories. Slowly, his own work shifted from integrating different theories to unifying the segments within one theory. His mentor Super had near the end of his career published a life-span, life space model with three major segments – individual differences, developmental tasks, and self-concept. Super hoped to someday integrate these segmental theories using a superordinate construct such as learning. Focusing on Super's goal of segment integration, Savickas eventually used the epistemology of social constructionism to craft an integration which he called career construction theory. A central part of that theory resulted from shifting focus on career maturity as an organismic variable that unfolded over time to career adaptability as a contextual variable responding to vocational development tasks, occupational transitions, and work traumas.

Following a suggestion by Super and Knasel, Savickas (1997) wrote an influential article (cited by 587 scholars) proposing the construct of career adaptability as an integrative construct for bridging theory segments. Inspired by McAdam's (1995) tripartite model of personality, Savickas reshaped the theory segments to describe vocational behavior from the three perspectives on the individual as object, subject, and project. Viewing vocational behavior from these three perspectives explains the interpretive and interpersonal process through which individuals construct themselves as actors, impose direction on their vocational behavior as agents, and make meaning of their careers as authors. To unify the three perspectives, he used the epistemology of social constructionism, thereby crafting the theory of career construction (cf., Savickas, 2005).

Within the theory of career construction, Savickas articulated a model of adaptation that coincided with its three perspectives. The model begins with the actor who shows some degree of readiness to adapt. Adaptivity or readiness denotes the personal characteristics of flexibility or willingness to meet transitions with fitting responses. However, adaptiveness is insufficient to support adapting behaviors; it must be accompanied by the agent's self-regulation resources to address the changing situation. Career construction theory refers to these psychosocial resources as adaptabilities with which to solve the unfamiliar, complex, and ill-defined problems presented by tasks, transitions, and traumas. Four key adaptabilities are concerned with the future, control of intentional vocational actions, curiosity about possible selves and occupational options, and confidence to deal with barriers. These adaptabilities condition the activities of adapting, that is, behavioral responses such as exploring, deciding, planning, and so on. The outcome of a cycle of adaptivity-adaptability-adapting is adaptation, operationally defined as success, satisfaction, and well-being (Maree, 2017, 2018).

There existed excellent measures to operationally define three parts of this model, but not for adaptability resources. Sponsored by Division 16, Savickas and his colleagues Maria Eduarda Duarte and Fred Leong organized a group of psychologists from 15 countries to meet at a series of international conferences to craft a psychometric measure of career adaptability. The *Career Adapt-Abilities Scale (CAAS)* was developed jointly by colleagues from across the globe and enabled international comparison yet also fit local contexts (cf., Leong & Walsh, 2012). The CAAS has been translated into 20 languages and is used extensively in research on vocational behavior and career development.

Together with Van Esbroeck from Vrije University in Brussels, Savickas organized the life-design international research group with members from seven European countries. Working collaboratively, they produced an influential statement of life design as third paradigm for career intervention rooted in social constructionism (Savickas et al., 2009). This highly cited article has been translated into six languages. Savickas then published a book on life-design counseling (2011), an instructional manual for learning life-design counseling (2015), a client workbook (Savickas & Hartung, 2012), and demonstration DVDs (2009). Throughout these materials, he maintains the distinction between career construction as a theory of vocational behavior and life designing as a counseling discourse.

Savickas' scholarly efforts can best be described as pioneering; the Olympic gold medal standard in the field of career counseling. Savickas' article entitled "Career counseling in the postmodern era" (Savickas, 1993) (cited by 324 scholars) caused a shift in the tectonic plates of career counseling. It helped to change the course of career counseling and was followed by numerous other ground-breaking publications from his pen. In 2011, and again in 2019, Savickas brought together his insights and contributions in a single publication, entitled *Career counseling* (editions one and two) (Savickas, 2011, 2019), which constitutes a benchmark for everyone writing on the subject. Savickas' greatest achievement, though, is the fact that he has single-handedly liberated career counseling theorists and practitioners alike from the shackles imposed by an overly positivist approach in the twentieth century – an approach which left little room for consideration of issues such as subjectivity, personal growth, discovery and improving the sense of self during career construction.

See Also

John Holland

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Further Reading

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