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INTERVIEW

An interview with Mark Savickas: themes in an eminent career

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Introduction

Mark Savickas is a major figure in the North American career field, where he was given the 'Eminent Career Award' by the National Career Development Association in 1996, and recognised for his 'Outstanding Achievement in Career and Personality Research' by the Counseling Psychology Division of the American Psychological Association in 1994. He was the main speaker at the CRAC/NICEC 'At the Cutting Edge' conference (Leicester, 17–19 April 2000) on the relationship between theory, research and practice. He also ran two enthusiastically received workshop sessions there, in which he opened his demonstrations of the use of thematic extrapolation with the words: 'How may I be useful to you?'

This one-and-a-half-hour interview took place after the conference, and refers to some of the issues discussed there. The transcript has been edited to reduce its length. Some references have also been inserted. To convey something of the flavour of the interview, it is noted when the speaker laughs; emphasis is denoted by italicisation.

The Interview

AC: *Thank you very much for agreeing to do this after what was probably a very busy time. I got the sense from those people with whom I was interacting that they had been* enormously, *not just impressed, but* moved *by your sessions, particularly the two workshop sessions. What we shall do now is to try to capture some of what you have brought here that the rest of the British field perhaps doesn't yet know about. So if we could start with what is a relatively innocuous question. Who are you, what do you do?*

MS: That's innocuous, 'who are you?' (Laughter) What I do is work at a medical school. I am Chairperson of the Department of Behavioral Sciences at the Northeastern Ohio Universities College of Medicine, where I have been on the Faculty since the College opened in 1977. My research area is careers, particularly the study of physician careers. When I was in college I had difficulty selecting a major

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because I did not want to compartmentalise myself into any particular discipline. After a time, I became fascinated with the area of work. And I thought that if I could study *work*, then I would be allowed to study psychology and work, sociology and work, economics and work, theology and work. So I was very much attracted to the study of work from all perspectives. I even collect books of poems and art about work. I find that it is central to my personal life, it is central to my response to people. I said in the workshop that I had become concerned about work issues as a little boy watching my father unable to get what I call a *real* job. So he always had to have two or three makeshift jobs. Because they weren't real jobs, they were odd jobs, he was often able to take me along. If he had a real job, I wouldn't have been able as a small boy to observe him on the job and learn to appreciate the value of hard work. I remember building chainlink fences with him as a five-year-old. I would carry the buckets of water to make cement and it would make me feel so good to have done something; it would make me feel grown up.

So work has always been central to my interests. But there is not a real home for it anywhere in any university. It is not *really* part of psychology, it is not part of sociology, it is not part of anything, yet it is part of everything. So, like you, I try to learn what I can from the different disciplines.

Why are you doing this in a medical college?

My medical college has been a wonderful home for me because I am surrounded by intellectually stimulating colleagues who always challenge my thinking. Although they are in fields such as biochemistry and anatomy, they teach me much about science, and even work. I came to be in a medical school because when I was finishing my PhD [1975] this new school was being chartered to open and my advisor and I went over to a warehouse where they were temporarily headquartered and proposed to offer workshops on counselling to their medical students, maybe once or twice a year. And they said: 'Well, that's interesting, why don't you propose a full curriculum in behavioural sciences?' So we went just to offer a workshop and it turned out that he and I became the new Department of Behavioral Sciences. We quickly learned that the methods and models we used in counselling transferred wonderfully to medical students preparing for careers in family medicine and primary care. It turned out to be a marvellous success and I am still there 25 years later. I have had the privilege of using my counselling skills in a very rich and exciting environment, although many days I long to be in a university department where I would have colleagues with an interest in vocational psychology and career counselling.

Where did your interest specifically in career start to develop and in what way?

That to me is an interesting story. I had not found my niche as an undergraduate and I'd sampled many different things. When I graduated in 1968, I decided to go into school psychology so that I could work with children. Because I completed my MA degree at Christmas [1971, aged 23], I had to wait until September to start my 1-year internship. At the college's counselling centre, one of the counsellors' fathers had died and he was

called home to run the family scrapyard – he was the eldest son, and it was his responsibility. So the director of the counselling service offered me a temporary job replacing him until he could hire somebody, and of course I said: 'Yes'.

So I walked into work one Monday morning, my first day, and a student walked in behind me. The Director said: 'Here's your first client'. (Laughter) I had no orientation to the job, and I was trained in school psychology. We went into my new office together, sat down, and he told me that he wanted help – careers advice – in choosing a major, but I knew nothing about this. So I struggled along and immediately enrolled in a careers course. The textbook for that course was John Crites's *Vocational Psychology* (1969). That book changed my life, it was one of the most interesting books I had ever read. I read it again and again. That book – combined with my practical experience working in the counselling centre – attracted me to the field of career counselling. So when September came, I stayed in the centre rather than becoming a school psychology intern. (Laughter)

Soon I went to the closest university that offered a doctorate and asked if I could get training in career counselling. The professor I was talking to, Glen Saltzman, who became my advisor, said that the university offered nothing more in career counselling, but if I *wanted* he would work with me and I could sign up every semester as a full-time student and go somewhere else to study, and then come back at the end of the term. So that was fortuitous – a wonderful person helped me to design my own doctoral training programme in careers work. He asked me: 'Who are the three people that you would love to meet?' (Laughter) So that's how I ended up. One semester I went to study with Donald Super at Teachers' College, Columbia University. Then another I went to the University of Maryland to study with John Crites. I just wrote Crites a letter and didn't even include my telephone number, but he found it, called me and invited me to stay with him. John Holland was equally gracious in helping me design my dissertation study. So each semester I would sign up for 15 hours of independent study and just bury myself in studying the work of, first Super, then Crites, and later Holland.

That was 15 years or so after Super's 1957 book on The Psychology of Careers, *so they were well established people in the field then, weren't they?*

They were the giants. They were the icons and Crites was Super's famous protege and, yes, they were very impressive figures I had read about. But on my own I would never have dreamed of calling them up – it was my advisor, who said: 'I can't teach you but I can help arrange for them to teach you'. Don Super later told me that he said received so many letters from people like me that he could not acknowledge them all – but I had included a resumé, so he thought maybe I was a little more serious than the others. (Laughter) So I had the privilege of taking my training with the ones who were writing the books and my dissertation was jointly designed with the help of Super and Holland – comparing Super's and Holland's definitions of vocational maturity. It was wonderful how two people who often disagreed with each other and had very different world views were both willing to help the same student.

And what do you think you took from each of them?

Crites was my first teacher; his book was very important to me. From Crites I learned that work could be studied as a psychological subject. He taught the difference between the content of an occupational choice and the process of career decision making. He just seemed to be the epitome of a scientist–practitioner. For ten years, he had directed a university counselling service as well as the counselling psychology training programme. So from him I learned to always integrate science and practice, never separate the two. To this day, I counsel with one or two individuals each week, usually medical or graduate students facing a career transition. So from Crites I learned a scientific attitude toward practical problems. From Super, I learned the importance of the developmental perspective. That perspective impressed me. In my counselling centre job, I was learning to test and tell, to match persons to positions. The developmental view was a revelation to me. I began to concentrate on individual development rather than individual differences. In addition, Super kept telling me: 'Don't be an opportunist, don't do convenient studies, instead do programmatic research'. If you do a study here and a study there, then they don't add up to much. He taught me the importance of being focused. From Holland I learned that you are wasting your time if you are doing science that doesn't have practical applications. His theory and testing materials were designed to be useful to practitioners (e.g. Holland, 1997). And indeed they are; that's why he's had such a tremendous influence on practice. So from Holland I learned to keep it simple, keep it practical. I think that each one of these great scholars took a different approach. I have tried to integrate Crites' psychological perspective upon careers, Super's developmental orientation, and Holland's emphasis on application.

Another important thing that I learned from Super is the thematic-extrapolation method which I demonstrated in this morning's workshop. Super's monumental Career Pattern Study which began in 1954 was originally designed to be a longitudinal study to examine career patterns and themes as they developed from the age of 14 on (Super, 1985). He told me that as the research team waited for the themes to develop, they became interested in studying adolescents' readiness to make educational and vocational choices. He ended up spending something like 25 years studying that – vocational maturity, as he called it. He never really got back to studying the career patterns and themes. I am lucky to be doing this now, along with Alan Bell from Indiana State University. In the early '70s, Super had selected ten individuals in the Career Pattern Study for intensive case study over the next 25 years. He believed that these individuals generally represented the important career patterns shown by the entire group of 100 participants. Bell kept contact with these ten individuals, repeatedly interviewing them. Now they are in their early 60s, mostly retired. I am collaborating with Bell on writing a chapter about each of these individuals that draws their life portraits, including career pattern and themes. It is wonderful collaboration. We make a great team because, in writing the life portraits, he focuses on intimacy, sexuality, and partnership, while I focus on identity, work, and achievement.

Thus, Bell and I are writing the final book that Super planned – the sixth book in the Career Pattern Study. I feel that Super's work is continuing when I work on this

book sitting in an office lined with 20 filing cabinets full of Don's Career Pattern Study data.

When do you see all this being completed?

I am almost done with case eight. Hopefully the book will be published in the fall of 2001.

Do you see this book, apart from its own intrinsic interest, as some kind of honouring of Donald Super?

Well, it is more than an honouring of Donald Super. I think it honours a longer tradition. I am also a follower of the work of Super's mentor, Harry Dexter Kitson. I am very interested in the history of guidance from its beginnings, the functionalist tradition of the '20s and the '30s: I see it as just a continuation of one school of thought. I am happy, for example, that I served as editor of the *Career Development Quarterly*, because Kitson edited it for 13 years. Also, I am happy to have received the Eminent Career Award from the National Career Development Association in the US because Kitson, Super and Crites had each received it. So yes, I have a sense of history.

Do you see that you have other projects of your own to complete beyond that?

I enjoy very much teaching the introductory career course to students who are going to become school and community counsellors. I have taught that same course twice a year for 29 years. I have been very successful in helping practitioners learn how to value career counselling, which is not always easy – a lot of students want to be marriage and family therapists. Many times they come to the career course as just a requirement to graduate. I *feel* I have been successful in convincing many of them about the importance of career counselling and about how work affects marriages and families. So I would like to write a textbook, a practical, 'how to' book – not how it should be done, but how I have done it.

I am also working on a new approach to interest measurement called 'person matching'. It involves getting a profile of values or interests from an individual and then, rather than matching the responses to an occupational group, matching the responses to the 10 people in the data set who have the most similar profiles. The individual would then receive short career biographies about the 10 people they matched most closely. I am particularly interested in using this approach to help medical student choose a medical specialty. We can do a pretty fair job separating surgeons out from physicians, but we do not do as well helping students make choices within these two groups of medical specialties. As Strong and Tucker (1952), and Campbell (1966), later confirmed, there is too much similarity among medical specialties for the traditional interest inventory to distinguish between them. So my hope is to provide medical students with detailed biographies of maybe half a dozen physicians who might serve as role models or key figures for

them as they think about choosing a medical specialty. Those half dozen physicians may be in three or four different specialities. So I think this is a way of vicariously providing role models, mentoring, and career coaching. It may fail, but it's a project that I am interested in.

So, you have got a full agenda at least for the near future. Trying to interpret what you are saying: there have been several strong influences on what has brought you from this little boy who used to go out with his father carrying buckets to where you are today. Obviously chance, circumstance, opportunity have played a part.

A large part. There is an old saying, the harder you work the luckier you get.

It was luck that it was Glen Saltzman . . .

Yes, yes. Because if I went to the office next door I believe they would have told me to go home.

So there is the luck. There is influence upon your thinking of certain key people, and you started off with Crites and then clearly Super and Holland have been influential. What else has influenced you to have brought you from that little boy to where you are today – on the other side of the world talking about it?

I don't know the answer to that question. I know that I am always curious, I am always looking for something new to learn and in fact every five years or so I find something that's brand new to me. One of the most important new ideas I came across was your work with Richard Young. I knew nothing about hermeneutics until I read your pair of articles (Collin & Young, 1988; Young & Collin, 1988). It was very influential. I would go over and over and over it because the ideas were so foreign to me and I could not understand them by just reading them once. I became interested in learning more about what you were doing. *That* shifted my thinking and opened up new horizons. It really focused my attention on Super's thematic-extrapolation technique. I may not be doing justice to your vision of the construction of careers by taking it backwards to life themes, but this is one way that I am able to make sense of it, and for me it becomes very, very, very much alive. It fits so well with Mary Sue Richardson's (1996) prompting us to shift from fitting people into occupations to fitting work into people's lives.

And now the new exciting idea I am taking from this conference today is how we need to change from a scientist–practitioner model that never seemed to work to a scholar–practitioner or knowledge production model. I think I will be working on that for a long while.

Another interest I have is time perspective, the personal experience of time, and how societies use time. It was exciting to me when I first discovered this topic and later learned about the important European work done on it. My interest in this came from Super's contention that the most important ingredient in career maturity is a 'planful' orientation to the future. Crites talked about future time perspective as

orientation and involvement in career planning. By the way, 'planfulness', a word often used by Super, isn't in the OED, although the OED does include 'planlessness' – only the negative. (Laughter)

When I approached the literature on time perspective, I was very confused because people would call the same thing by different names. For example, they used all the following terms for time perspective: time orientation, time extension, time differentiation, and so on. There were also too many measures of these constructs. One thing that I worked on was to take 31 different measures and factor analyse them to create a model of temporal experience that has three dimensions. The first dimension concerns perspective on the past, future, present, and some other factors. The second dimension is differentiation, which means how far you extend into the future and how densely you populate the future with events. The third dimension is continuity, which means the connectedness between the time zones that leads to optimism about the future and the achievability of goals. I have done several studies on how career interventions change the personal experience of time and right now I am working on a project with Fred Vondracek, looking at differences in the time perspective of adolescents raised in collectivist and individualistic societies, as well as at how temporal perspective relates to self-authoring a career versus following societal scripts in accepting a career.

Do you get a sense that people's time perspective in this postmodern age and global economy is changing? Are we experiencing time differently?

I don't think the perspective has changed. I think that the people who would have been future oriented in earlier times are future oriented now. I think within that model I talked about, what is different is the differentiation. It is harder to populate the future with stable, predictable events, things one can plan on. Without seeing predictable events, one can be very interested in the future, but it does not seem real, it does not seem tangible.

The structures are no longer there to link yourself to it.

Exactly it. In organisations they used to say that a tremendous leader could stand up and create a vision for the next five years, and then people could link themselves to that. Today nobody seems to be able to do this. Today at the conference they were talking about the Internet and how it is unpredictable, uncontrollable. So I think the people who have a strong future orientation are more *anxious* than they were ten years ago because they are interested in preparing for their future, protecting their future, but less sure how to do it.

Do you have a strong future orientation and are you like them?

(Laughter) Yes, I have a strong future orientation and I am trying right now to map out the years from now to retirement and how I am going to use them productively so that when I retire I can feel that I finished the work that I started. I am becoming

much more focused as time feels more and more like sand slipping through my hand. I am trying to make sure that the projects that I work on are the ones that *I* feel need to be done. I am always looking at what needs to be done next. It is an orientation towards life. So, yes, I have a strong future orientation.

You have been talking about finishing the Super set of books, and the other work you have been doing. But do you see anything beyond the next five years or so? What other goals are there?

I'm excited by my empirical projects. Right now I am working on one that compares models of career maturity to models of personal maturity, trying to link vocational psychology back to personality psychology. I am also working on a project with Arnold Spokane that examines how a large group of people score on five different interest inventories. If you take two different interest inventories, you often get two different sets of results. Practitioners should not think that an interest inventory is an objective assessment. This is a rather elaborate project just to remake a point that was made in the 1960s by Donald Zytowski (1968). I want to focus attention on the work of Harry Dexter Kitson (1942) who, starting in the 1920s, argued that the job of the counsellor is to help clients create interests, not use interest inventories to help clients discover their interests. This is a powerful idea if one takes a narrative and constructivist perspective on careers.

From what I see of you, from what I have *seen of you and what I know of you, I suspect that not only is your life work to do with developing and transmitting your own ideas, it is also something to do with developing this whole field.*

That is more important to me than what we have been talking about. (Laughter) I always felt, Audrey, when coming from a working-class background with parents who hadn't been to college, the first in the family to go to college, that I never had a mentor or someone who would help me. And it seemed that for a long, long time I was struggling, being envious of people who had the opportunity to study with Super and Crites full-time, to go to their universities. So going as a visitor and picking their brains for a while was wonderful, but I never had anybody to take me to conventions or to show me how to write an article. Only after I was an associate professor, and Crites had moved to Kent State University where I was at, was I able to learn from him how to write a research article. I had been trying to write my first article, and had sent it to the *Journal of Educational Psychology*, but the editor wrote back saying: 'You have wonderful ideas but you don't have a *clue* about how to write a journal article. Why don't you get the help of somebody who does, and resubmit?' I always remember gratefully that editor, who instead of just saying 'no', encouraged me to *learn* how to write. I have always believed in trying to do for others what I had wanted for myself.

So I dedicate myself to this day to helping in appropriate ways the new professionals to the field. I go out of my way to nurture their careers, to make them feel welcome. You've seen one of my tricks at conventions is always to pair very

prominent people in the field with somebody brand new to give them visibility. This was my motivation in helping to found the Society for Vocational Psychology whose mission is to reinvigorate vocational psychology by drawing *young* people to the discipline and helping them get started. As an editor, I try to help authors, especially first-time authors, refine their work and learn what they need to do to improve their technical writing. I enjoyed being editor of the *Career Development Quarterly* for seven years, and now I'm editor of the *Journal of Vocational Behavior*. I feel privileged to have been allowed to be editor of the main practitioner journal *and* the main science journal. I have edited three books and I included some younger people there, too. So I see the role of editor not as *gatekeeper*, the one who decides what goes in and what doesn't, but as the role of someone trying to foster, facilitate, encourage, and bring new voices in. I think it is a wonderful position in which to help develop careers, not just in theory but in practice.

I assume that it is not just a question of publishing, but also of getting people together.

That's right. I love to bring people together. I have organised three national conferences in the States and three international conferences (Lisbon, Ghent, and Toronto) that have brought people together. And I have been programme chair for the careers division for four conventions. Most people do it once, but I have done it four times because I enjoy having the opportunity to make sure the programme is populated by new people, new voices, new visions. And one of the things that I always, always do is make sure that the presenters are from diverse backgrounds. I also organised the Careers Special Interest Group in the International Association for Applied Psychology. I like to have these positions of influence so that I can help and be useful.

Does that mean you see yourself as a politician, as an energiser, a catalyst, a facilitator?

None of those. (Laughter) I dislike politicians and politics – that's not me – and I am not an energiser; I am too quiet and shy. I see what I do as making opportunities to foster human development. I see it as a chance to create environments for people from varied backgrounds to come together. I try to create a safe space so that their talents and visions can be nurtured. And I try to be a strong voice for fairness and equity. I take pride in the ability to create spaces for things to happen, and I am very proud that my colleagues trust me. They don't follow me, I am not their leader, I am not a politician, I don't energise, but I make sure everybody has a fair turn and people feel safe. I think that's different from being a politician. There are competitive forces, so if I attend a meeting I try to *ensure* that competitiveness is turned into co-operation. Nobody should be allowed to hurt anybody else. I am not *for* the competition, I am for collaboration, co-operation.

Because of this, I think people trust me – I hope they do. I think I am allowed to be the *steward* of the journal because I am trustworthy, and my colleagues know that I won't shut out or exclude anybody, that I will be even-handed, and I will treat it as *our* journal, not *my* journal.

That obviously says a great deal about you, but maybe it also says a lot about your colleagues.

Our profession is also a focus for friendship. At conferences and meetings, we make friends, we go to dinners together year after year, we meet at cocktail hours, and are interested in each other's lives and children. So it is not all work. I am interested in my colleagues as full human beings, and what's happening in their lives.

Certainly the way you have expressed how you have come from your start to where you are now has been very much in terms of relationships, and other people, and has quite a strong historical sense.

I didn't recognise that until you just said it. I feel it as a family with *a* grandfather and a father and a great-grandfather and kids.

And who is the great-grandfather?

Kitson. I am very interested in the history of the field and I study everything I can find about Kitson, who was trained by James Rowland Angel, who later became the president of Yale University. Angel earned a master's degree from John Dewey and a master's degree from William James. So I am interested in the flow of ideas. I view our intellectual heritage as a conversation, and I don't think the voices from the past are silent: we can still hear them if we listen. I learn a *lot* from reading Kitson; I think his work is still fresh. So I view Kitson as a part of my professional family tree.

Do you have any fears *for the future of that family?*

Yes. I have *great* fears. For many years we haven't been doing a good enough job of bringing new professionals into the fold. It is very hard to recruit students who want to do career counselling, who want to do vocational research. The trend in America is marriage and family counselling and community counselling. They want to be 'Therapists'. So there are not as many people entering the field as I wish there were. I wish there were five times as many. There are not as many people in research submitting manuscripts to journals. So my fear is that we are always going to be a small group of people and the reason for the fear is that we need more than a small group of people working on something tremendously important – the role of work in the community, and how people contribute and connect to work. My hope is that following the lead of people like you and Mary Sue Richardson (e.g. 1996) and David Blustein (e.g. 1995) we have stopped separating *off* career from relationships. So people who are interested in relationships will also get interested in career. Nancy Betz once undermined the rift between vocational and personal counselling by saying: 'I don't know about you, but my career is pretty personal to me'. I thought that was a most elegant statement. (Laughter) Unless we somehow reunite work with life in the minds of counsellors, we are doomed to just work at the margins. And I think we have so much more to contribute.

What do you see as the new ideas that are likely to be breaking in North America? I mean, it seems to me that the chaos/complexity thing is sort of bubbling away. But do you see other new things cropping up?

Chaos theory, that's a hard one. It *started* to develop and then it disappeared for several years. I am not sure about chaos theory. Maybe it is because I can't quite grasp it. I have heard intriguing lectures on applying it to daily mood states in manic–depressive patients, but I still do not see how to use it in conceptualising career development. But what I hope starts to happen is what we were talking about at this conference. We are too small in numbers to have epistemic wars between quantitative and qualitative researchers. We need to resolve this rift; we don't have enough troops to be divided and hostile to each other. In the United States, I see a possible resolution in returning to our roots in Dewey and James's pragmatism. Hopefully what is going to be happening is that positivism is viewed as one script. Although the postmodernists assert that everybody has a different perspective, and each is respectable, they do not seem to respect positivism as *one* good vantage point on life. I hope that we can go back to an affirmative pragmatism, or accept a neo-pragmatism such as Rorty's (1999). I think the American culture is rich in the pragmatic attitude and that we can apply that attitude in using the great power of the computers and the Web to form practice research networks. I would like to be involved in getting the practice research networks started for careers: hopefully we will be *able* to do that. And then use the computer to create the practice community.

Was the Dewey pragmatism something that you had started from and has always been there for you, or are you coming to it now?

I am coming to it now. What I started from was old-fashioned functionalism. The Chicago school of functionalism was headed by James Rowland Angel and Harvey Carr who were both on Kitson's dissertation committee. Kitson did the first college counselling dissertation. Dewey was there with them at Chicago and then moved to Columbia rather quickly. I see much of my intellectual heritage and my own thinking as old-fashioned functionalist, although I think you hit the nail on the head, I am coming to pragmatism. I know that functionalism died out a long time ago, but I think *our* field in the States has been very much based on it, rather than its counterpoint of structuralism. Structuralism became existentialism and functionalism transformed itself into Watson's behaviourism. So, yes, I am an old-fashioned functionalist just coming to pragmatism through Rorty (1999) going back to Dewey. I appreciate Dewey's (1929) ideas about avoiding dichotomies such as theory and practice, judging knowledge by its usefulness, and being transdisciplinary. All those ideas seem very useful to me.

You talked earlier about doing a lot of things on your own and being quite comfortable. In this moving towards or through this pragmatism, do you think you are alone or do you think there are many people with you?

I may be alone in this in the career field now, but I won't be alone long.

Because you will persuade people.

I don't know if I will persuade them, but I think that by doing practical things, by doing demonstrations, by showing people this is what you can do with it, people may find it useful in their own work.

Do I feel a conference coming on here?

Oh yes. (Laughter) Yes, I told Tony [Watts] when I left the conference, this will be a special issue of the journal, this will be an edited book and this will be a conference. And through the conference things might change a little. Timing is everything. Career counsellors have to be ready, but I sense there is high readiness for a different process to look at. I try to see what is going on in 10 different places, to learn what is happening in different corners of the world, and then organise a conference or some other activity that brings it all together. This is not making it happen or creating it; it is just publicising it, affirming it, or giving it a platform.

Giving it a name even.

Yes, even giving it a name, giving it a space, giving it pages in a journal legitimises it. Names make it real, names give it a *home* and attract a group of scholars who identify with it, and advocate for it, and then it has to prove its usefulness. You asked earlier about what might be bubbling to the surface in the United States: we are becoming very interested in relational approaches to careers, Doug Hall (Hall & Associates, 1996) and David Blustein's (e.g. 1995) work on attachment patterns and careers. Anne Roe (1956) tried that, but didn't have a lot of success. I don't know why. Practitioners say relationships greatly influence career choice and adjustment, but the research findings have been equivocal. I think we will be returning to the role of the family and the role of interpersonal relationships in career. Creating special issues and publishing monographs on the topic will increase interest in the topic.

You talked about Hall. Do you meet with people like him, and Ed Schein and Michael Arthur? Do you have contacts?

No, I don't have personal relationships, but Hall is on the Editorial Board of the *Journal of Vocational Behavior.* I am interested in work from the *individual's* perspective, not from the organisation's. But people like Hall and Schein and others, although they are in management or IO (individual and organisation) psychology, their perspective is also on individuals. So I feel great affinity to their work, and I read their books and learn a great deal. I don't have much in common or network with IO psychologists who work for the organisation: it is beyond the boundaries of my interests. But there are people like you in business schools who are interested in both the individual and the organisation – we know each other. (Laughter)

It is clear from what you have said today that part of you is an interest in history and I know that you love your books and things. What is the Mark Savickas as the 'whole person'? You know, what is your family?

I am glad to have the opportunity to say that my family is the *joy* of my life. They are why I am productive, because I am working for a *purpose*, I am working for *them* and for their well-being; and we work as a family team. If I have a rough day they are there for me and *vice versa*. They are central in my life – my wife Mary Ann and my daughter Sue – and they are of course much more important than anything we have talked about so far. Tolstoy said one works for those one loves, so that's true about me.

You talked about taking that temporary counselling job, you talked about your independent study. At what point did you marry in all that?

In the summer of 1975, I married, received my PhD degree, began my first job as a professor, and bought a house. I think one of the things that has been a strong foundation for my career is that being a single person through graduate school I was totally free to go travelling to study with Super and with Crites. I was able to do my intensive study before forming a relationship and a family. As I reflect on it, I would not have been able to do those things if my life had been structured in other ways. (Laughter)

And does your wife professionally share your interests, or does she have complementary interests?

She has a master's degree in counselling and worked for five years during our marriage as a counsellor at a high school for girls. Then we had our daughter in 1979 and she moved on: she got into her *real* dream of being an artist. She is a ceramic artist, a potter, that's her true love, that's her family tradition. I learn a lot from her, especially about the philosophy of art and the artist's vision, the artist's way. She also teaches me a lot about career and work. But I would say we have separate careers.

And have there been lessons that have been learned by becoming a parent? Lessons about career and about the importance of career, from the perspective of becoming a parent?

It has been fun to watch our daughter's childhood playfulness transform itself into the serious work of a young adult. I used to always separate work and play, keep them as two discrete things. Ed Bordin kept writing me these letters – he was a very prominent psychoanalytical counsellor – saying that I took a too-pessimistic view of work. I believed that work was to create a future. He kept telling me I needed to better understand work, that work emerges from play and work continues to have play in it. And Bordin told me that about half a dozen times, but I learned it by being a parent, by watching . . . That would be *one* lesson. Another lesson is that being a parent is the most important job anybody will ever have, and we put all our effort into being adequate. *I hope* that we are.

And do you think that, having learned this lesson about the relationship between work and play, you have become more playful in your *work?*

No. (Laughter) No, I am still struggling.

And in your relationship with your daughter – if you were ever invited to counsel her, her future career and her career development, how would you go about that?

I would refer her to a trusted colleague. (Laughter) One can't counsel your own family, my job is to be father.

Formally, yes, you would refer her, but informally you can't avoid it, can you?

It pleases me that she is a second-year student at the same college that Harry Dexter Kitson went to, so I guess that informally . . . What I hope, what my approach would be is what I said earlier, that *life* is important, not career, and the balance of work and friends, play and relationships is the important thing. And I hope you plan a life, live a life, where you have a balance, so that if something goes wrong in one of them, which it will, you have the others as support.

And you believe that she would see that in you, would she: she would see that balance in you?

She would see the balance between work and love and. . .

Play?

Play – to be honest with you, she still sticks notes in my luggage if she knows I am going on a trip, and the note this time was 'Don't forget to play'.

So she does not quite *see it yet.*

She sees the lack of it, yes. But she is encouraging.

You have got a little way to go.

She did buy me a brass plaque years ago that on one side says 'work' and when you flip it over it says 'play'. We have this little game where I always leave the 'work' side up; I know she has been home when I see the 'play' side turned up.

Before we close, I want to ask you what you thought your legacy *was for the future. Daniel Levinson (Levinson* et al., *1978) talks about how, when one gets to mid-life, one is starting to think about the* legacy *one is leaving for the future. I wonder what you thought your legacy was?*

What I work to make my legacy is to nurture and encourage the careers of my young colleagues. Knowing that I had some small part to play in their contribution

and success would make me very happy. So I would hope my legacy would be the lives I have been able to touch through being encouraging and helpful to the next generation, trying to tear down barriers rather than set up barriers. Other than that, I don't expect to have a legacy or to be remembered. I always try and focus on: 'What am I doing? What comes next?', and do my best to spend as little time as possible on thinking: 'How am I doing? How good or how bad?' So I try to concentrate on what is happening, what comes next, what can I do about the situation. So questions about legacy are – they pull me off track – any time I spend thinking about that is non-productive. It may sound silly, but I try to focus on what am I going to do tomorrow.

I certainly think that from what I had heard yesterday about your workshop session, and experiencing it for myself, you have left those of us who were there with a great deal to think about and quite a degree of astonishment and a feeling you were touching something quite powerful. So certainly as far as your legacy in this conference, I think it will be really great.

That makes me feel useful. (Laughter)

Which was your opening question at your conference workshop: 'How can I be useful to you?' Even that is a legacy that you are leaving us. Thank you very much indeed.

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