Australasian Personal Construct Newsletter
No.43

INDEX

1. WHAT'S HAPPENING?

2. APS INTEREST GROUP

3. PCP AND EDUCATION

5. UNIV OF WOLLONGONG PERSONAL CONSTRUCT GROUP

6. 1997 INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS

7. CONSTRUCTIVISM IN PSYCHOTHERAPY

8. JOURNAL OF CONSTRUCTIVIST PSYCHOLOGY, VOLUME 8, NUMBER 4

9. Thomson, A. & Cummins, P. (Eds): European Perspectives in Personal Construct Psychology. Selected Papers from the Inaugural Conference of the EPCA. York England. 1992.

10. WORLD WIDE WEB SITE

11. PRESENTATIONS AT THE INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS

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1. WHAT'S HAPPENING?

The **XIth International PCP Congress in Barcelona** was thoroughly enjoyed by everyone, from comments I've heard - even by the people who were robbed (and there was one a day of those) or developed bronchitis in the smog. Most people seemed to come early and stay on later to take advantage of this opportunity to visit such an interesting place and still participate in the conference as a whole. Our hotel was situated in between Montjuic (with the Miro museum and many other attractions) and the old city, with the closest street through to the Ramblas being where Picasso had lived and where the amazing Palau Guell designed by Gaudi was situated.

People seemed surprised at the numbers of Australasians attending - 13 Australians and one New Zealander (plus a couple of partners). There was a large group of

Spaniards involved, with simultaneous translation in one room where the plenary sessions were held. I've included a probably incomplete list of presentations later in the newsletter

Another major piece of news is that **Tom Ravenette** will be visiting Perth and Wollongong in September. He'll also be going to Christchurch, New Zealand, but I'm not sure if he will be working there or not (contact is Rosemary Tredgold, 64 3 379 8150). Tom, for those who don't know, has worked very extensively with children and adolescents, and has developed many innovative techniques for nonverbal explorations of meaning. He hasn't published extensively, so this provides us with an opportunity to learn about his innovative and creative approach.

His workshops, in particular, are a total delight. At conferences they are always repeated and even then book out as soon as they are offered with people who have experienced Tom's work previously.

There will be a workshop in Perth for the WA PCP group on 16 September. For details contact either Janet Bayliss (09 386 5338), Tony Jonikis (09 386 7332) or Miriam Stein (09 384 7257).

We have yet to finalise what is happening in Wollongong, but there are likely to be several workshops since Tom likes to work with small groups of 12. He'll be here between 21st September and the 26th. When the Wollongong details are finalised I'll do a mailout within NSW and ACT. If anyone is thinking of coming from interstate can they let me know so I can send them the information.

The Canberra group has agreed to host the next **Australasian PCP conference.** Mark Balnaves has agreed to be the convenor. It will be held at the University of Canberra, probably.

During the **APS conference** in Perth Bill Warren will be presenting a paper for the group in a symposium of representatives from interest groups. The WA group are hoping to organise a social get together for PCP people. A notice will be put on the noticeboard at the conference for those attending.

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2. APS INTEREST GROUP

As you are aware we now have an interest group within the Australian Psychological Society as part of the Australasian group. This complication is causing me large headaches in terms of keeping track of members and doing mailouts, as well as being somewhat besieged with various requests - all perfectly legitimate and sensible, but time-consuming nevertheless.

A set of draft rules for interest groups has been prepared. If implemented these will mean some changes for us.

Membership records for the APS members of the interest group will be maintained by the National APS office, with non-APS members being maintained by the group. This will complicate things for me

substantially and reduce my capacity to do searches by postcode, for example, for certain mailouts.

Office bearers will be for a three year term by ballot (this will be a nuisance for us since we currrently have two years to coincide with the biennial conference). An audited statement of expenditure must be furnished at the annual general meeting of the interest group. (But we don't have an annual general meeting). The National committee also is required to present an annual report at the annual general meeting. The National committee is required to meet three times in each 12 months (how is that to be paid for and what do we need to meet about?). State groups may be formed with the support of 10 members of an interest group. (The document doesn't say if they must be APS members). Production of a newsletter requires the approval of the Director of Communications.

Anyway, I forsee problems that we will have to address in some form.

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3. PCP AND EDUCATION

This appeared on the pcp email from Bonnie Shapiro.

> "Recently I published a book that may be of interest to some colleagues working in the area. It is entitled, **What Children Bring to Light: A Constructivist Perspective on Children's Learning in Science**. The book is designed to introduce teachers and researchers in science education and other fields to constructivism in educational practice and how it has developed. I attempt to link the historical development of constructivism with the "alternative frameworks" literature--work in science education which focusses on learners' ideas about phenomena and which suggests how teachers might better use the learner's ideas and own efforts to make meaning as a basis for curriculum development and classroom activities. The heart of the book is a set of six case studies of children learning about the topic light in their grade five classroom. Each child's constructs regarding ideas about what it means to learn science in the classroom setting is presented.
>
> In the latter chapters I propose use of the construct, 'personal orientation to science learning' as a basis for organizing learning--At the center of this construct is 'the learning person' whose own efforts to make connections among ideas is given high status. The remaining sections suggest approaches that might be used by a teacher interested in providing opportunities for learners to construct meaning--opportunities to use small group interaction, graphic organizers such as concept mapping, tools such as the classroom profile as a devise for sensitive listening. 'The learning person' is at the center of this model, rather than the curriculum which is more typically placed at the center. The term 'learning person' is used to allow us to consider the teacher as learner in addition to the "student."
>
> The book is published by Teachers College Press (New York, 1994).

I have written several other articles applying a personal construct theory approach to research in education. I apologize for this message being so lengthy, but I would like to suggest that other educators or those interested in educational applications send me references -- articles that have been particularly useful in considering educational issues from a constructivist perspective--particularly those using personal construct theory. I will collect them and put them together and send them out to anyone interested. Send these to my personal e-mail address below."

Bonnie Shapiro Telephone (403) 220-3844

726 EDT Fax (403) 282-8479

The University of Calgary Internet: bshapiro@acs.ucalgary.ca

Calgary, Alberta T2N 1N4

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5 UNIV OF WOLLONGONG PERSONAL CONSTRUCT GROUP

Room 19:1067, Wednesdays 9-10.30

Date Topic Facilitator

2/8 Discussion re David Green's Everyone

"Womens' construction of her

alternatives: Adolescent pregnancy

and the choice corollary"

9/8 Constructivist model of risk Lindsay Oades

taking

16/8 Anxiety, attributional styles & Mohammad

socio-demographic factors as Khodayraifard

predictors of academic

performance

23/8 Working with the spouses of Jan Howells

alcoholics

30/8 ????

13/9 Dementia and sexuality Marilyn Rudd

20/9 Relationships and emotion Lyn Toms

21-26/9 VISIT BY TOM RAVENETTE

11/10 Sexual assault counseling Carole Carter

18/10 Construct elicitation: Triadic vs. Kathleen

self-characterisation Houldsworth

25/10 Dependency and empathy Kaye Poston

1/11 The measurement of meaning Peter Caputi & Lindsay Oades

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6 1997 INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS

Plan now for the

XII International Congress

on Personal Construct

Psychology

5 10 August 1997*

University of Washington

Seattle, Washington, USA

The setting will be scenic and centrally located in one of the most beautiful areas in the USA The opportunities for dialogue and socialising will be plentiful

The housing and dining rates will be reasonable:
Single Rooms: - $32 /day per person
Double Rooms: - $21 / day per person
Three meals per day: - $20/ day per person

The program will be diverse and stimulating.

For program information, contact

April Metzler, Lehigh University,

111 Research Drive, Bethlehem, PA 180154792

Phone: (610) 7586093

email: aem3@1ehigh.edu

For further information, contact

Jerald Forster, 402 Miller Hall,

University of Washington, Seattle, WA 98195

Phone: (206) 5434970

email: counsel@u.washington.edu

* We asked in Barcelona that these dates be changed so that Australians and New Zealanders could attend.

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7 CONSTRUCTIVISM IN PSYCHOTHERAPY

Table of Contents for *CONSTRUCTIVISM IN PSYCHOTHERAPY*

Edited by Robert A. Neimeyer, University of Memphis and Michael J. Mahoney, University of North Texas

Published by the American Psychological Association.

Introduction:

- **Chapter 1. An invitation to constructivist psychotherapies**
  - *Robert A. Neimeyer*

- **Part I: Historical and Conceptual Foundations**
  - Chapter 2. Constructivist psychotherapies: Features, foundations, and future directions
    - *Robert A. Neimeyer*
  - Chapter 3. The continuing evolution of the cognitive sciences and psychotherapies
    - *Michael J. Mahoney*
  - Chapter 4. Forms and facets of constructivist psychology
    - *William J. Lyddon*
  - Chapter 5. Constructivist psychotherapy: A theoretical framework
    - *Vittorio Guidano*

- **Part II: Personal Change and Reconstruction**
  - Chapter 6. The challenge of change
    - *Greg J. Neimeyer*
  - Chapter 7. Meaning-making and creative aging
    - *Mary Baird Carlsen*
  - Chapter 8. Self observation in constructivist psychotherapy
    - *Vittorio Guidano*

- Chapter 9. A dialectical constructivist approach to experiential change
  - *Leslie Greenberg and Juan Pascual-Leone*

- **Part III: The Narrative Turn**
  - Chapter 10. Hermeneutics, constructivism, and cognitive-behavioral therapies: From the object to the project
    - *Oscar Goncalves*
  - Chapter 11. Client-generated narratives in psychotherapy
    - *Robert A. Neimeyer*
  - Chapter 12. From assessment to change: The personal meaning of clinical problems in the context of self-narrative
    - *Hubert J. M. Hermans*

- **Part IV: Social Systemic Perspectives**
  - Chapter 13. Radical constructivism: Questions and answers
    - *Jay S. Efran & Robert L. Fauber*
  - Chapter 14. Personal constructs in systemic practice
    - *Guillem Feixas*
  - Chapter 15. Termination as a rite of passage: Questioning strategies for a therapy of inclusion
    - *David Epston & Michael White*

- **Part V: The Challenge of Constructivist Psychotherapy**
  - Chapter 16. Optimal therapeutic distance: A therapist's experience of personal construct psychotherapy
    - *L. M. Leitner*
  - Chapter 17. Clinical mythology in working with borderline processes
    - *Stephanie Harter*
  - Chapter 18. The psychological demands of being a constructive psychotherapist
    - *Michael J. Mahoney*

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8 JOURNAL OF CONSTRUCTIVIST PSYCHOLOGY, VOLUME 8, NUMBER 4, 1995

Constructivism in Psychotherapy: Limits and Lessons

Guest Editor: Alvin R. Mahrer

What Lessons Does Constructivism Have for the Field Of Psychotherapy? An Introduction And Some Of The Key Questions

Alvin R. Mahrer

Piaget and Derrida's Contributions to a Constructivist Psychotherapy

Donald E. Polkinghorne

Constructivism, Psychotherapy, and the Dialogue of Touchstones

Maurice Friedman

It It Time For Clinical Psychology To Deconstruct Constructivism?

Maureen O'Hara

The Real Meaning Of Constructivism

Barbara S. Held

Configurationism: Constructivism From an Experiential Perspective

Arthur C. Bohart

A Solution to an Illusory Problem: Patients Construct Their Worlds:Versus, There Really is a Reality

Alvin R. Mahrer

The Contributions of Constructivism: Some closing reflections

Robert A. Neimeyer

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9 Thomson, A. & Cummins, P. (Eds): European Perspectives in Personal Construct Psychology. Selected Papers from the Inaugural Conference of the EPCA. York England. 1992.

- PERSONAL CONSTRUC'T THEORY IN EUROPE: HOW DO THE SPEC'TACLES FIT? David A. Winter
- CONSTRUING RELATIONSHIPS SOME THOUGHTS ON PCP AND DISCOURSE Vivien Burr
- DETECTIVE COMPREHENSIONS A TECHNlQUE FOR HELPING CLIENTS AND THERAPISTS TO FIND STARTING POINTS FOR THEIR INVESTlGATlONS Marion Granville
- SUPERORDINATE CONSTRUCTS: THE LONGTERM PERSPECTIVE THE RELATIONSHIP OF HIERARCHICAL DESCRIPTIONS OF BEHAVIOUR TO PERSONAL CONSTRUCT THEORY David Savage
- THE APPRECIATIVE STYLES PERSONAL WAYS OF CONSTRUING SOCIAL PARTNERS Ana Catina and Stroe Marcus
- SUBJECTING AND OBJECTING IN PERSONAL CONSTRUCT PSYCHOLOGY Bill Warren
- CONSTRUING REPRODUCING AND RECONSTRUC'TING SOCIETY A VIEW FROM PCP .Devorah KalekinFishman
- ACTIVATING ACTIVE LEARNING CONFINING CONSTRUCTS RECONSTRUED Pam Denicolo
- CONSTRUCTIONS OF SELFCONSCIOUSNESS Trevor Butt
- THE AWFUL, AWEFUL NATURE OF ROLE RELATlONSHlPS The Gavin Dunnett Memorial Lecture. L. M. Leitner & A. F. Guthrie
- DlFFICULTIES OF ASKING PEOPLE WHAT THEIR CONSTRUCTS ARE Martin Fromm

- A STONE THROWN INTO A POND THE PERSON AS A CONSTRUING
- IDENTITY Sicco DeJong
- MY SISTER MY BROTHER MYSELF SlBLING FACTORS IN THE CHILD'S
- CONSTRUING OF SELF Peggy Dalton
- THE ANALYSIS OF REPERTORY GRIDS USED TO MONITOR THE PERCEPTIONS OF RECOVERING PSYCHOTIC PATIENTS Richard C. Bell and Patrick McGorry

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10 WORLD WIDE WEB SITE

The Personal Construct Research Group at the University of Wollongong have established a homepage on the World Wide Web. The site is still very much experimental. It contains bits and pieces including brief descriptions of PCP, abstracts of articles written by members of the School of Psychology, information on GPACK, along with access to some recent issues of the Australasian PCP newsletter. In the near future we hope to include Gabrielle Chiari's bibliography of materials related to PCP as a database on the homepage. If you are interested the site URL is http://www.psyc.uow.edu.au/pcp/. If you have any queries, please forward them to Peter Caputi, email: p.caputi@uow.edu.au

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11 PRESENTATIONS AT THE INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS

PLENARIES

Mair, M. A long term quest for understanding

Fransella, F. The Psychology of Personal Constructs in the context of psychology in general and George Kelly in particular

Botella, L. Exploring elusive horizons: PCP and constructivisim in a postmodern culture

Bruner, J Personal construct theory and constructivism in psychology

Adams-Webber

Shaw M & Gaines B Constructing the web

Gergen, K Personal Construct theory and constructionism in social

Mascolo M psychology

Rivas F Del estudio cognitivo intensivo a la inverstiacion extensiva a partir de la Tecnica de Rejilla: Posibilidades, problemas y propuestas

Novak J Personal construct theory and constructivism in education

Pope, M

PAPERS AND WORKSHOPS

Garrido M La Construccion de realidades alternatives en psicoterapia. El equipo reflexivo como favorecedor del cambio

Stevens R Re-Visioning psychology: Making sense of psychological understanding

Anderson R Interpreting therapeutic process: A constructivist perspective

Segura P Analytic Psychology and PCP

Faidley A.J Role relationships: A Methodology for Exploring shared universes of meaning

Fournier V Graduates' construction systems and career development

Hackner E Cognitive mapping of vocational education efficiency: A study of school administrators in Sweden and the US

Metzler A Changing perspectives in career: A Multiple case study

Scheer J & Ellis J Construing successful ageing

Jones H (convener): PCP in action: Becoming creative extending personal horizons

Cornejo J.M Analisis de correspondencias para rejillas: El programa

Feixas G & RECORD

Bach L

Metzler A.E PCGRID version 1.0

Magargal L

Leitner L.M A qualitative analysis of personal constructs in

Faidely A.J ROLE versus casual relationships

Sloan P

Celentana M &

Werden E

Forster J Facilitating the articulation of personal meanings

Gergen M Positioning in gendered relations: From constructivism to constructionism

Bezzi A PCP and the teaching of petrology at undergraduate level

Butler C The effects of psychological stress on the success and failure of music conservatoire students

Denicolo P & Attributes required of graduates by employers: Degree of

Harwood A congruence with educational perceptions

Miro M. (convener): Psychotherapy integration and scientific psychology

Viney L.L An evaluation of personal construct and psychodynamic

Henry R.W & group work with centre-based juvenile offenders and

Campbell J school-based adolescents

Walker B M Dispersion of dependency and its relationships: Recent research

Werden E M A constructivist view of suicide

Warren W.G & The personal construction of death in anorexia nervosa

Beaumont P.V.J

Burrell M An evolutionary-constructivist view of "drug-addiction"

Lynch P Alternative Constructs about adolescents smoking

Kalekin-Fishman Constructing a concept of teaching

Kreber C & Professional role constructs of "expert" and "novice"

Adams-Webber J university teachers

Southhall N Trust me. I am telling you stories

Woolum S & Speaking of created places: A Metaphor workshop

Senese D

Winter D Personal construct psychotherapy and the cognitive

Watson S therapies: Different in theory but can they be differentiated in practice

Semerari A Iatrogenic psychotherapy induced disorder: Hypothesis

Nicolo G & for a clinical and diagnostic model

Carcione A

Salter D The cost of being a constructivist psychologist; the role of threat in transmission of knowledge between health care professionals

Bicego B What makes AIDS special? PCP and human life-span

development

Cross M C & Young people and safer sexual consciousness

Holland P A

Green D Woman's construction of her alternatives: Adolescent pregnancy and the choice corollary

Thomson L A constructivist perspective of teacher development and change

Watts M & Shared representations, ideology and learning; A

Hampton J constructivist study on the impact of professional education

Ravenette T The self-description grid revisited

Butt T (convenor): Core construing and the sense of self

Bach L Indices cognitivos en la tecnica de rejilla con el programa

Feixas G Y & RECORD

Cornejo J M

Bell R C The analysis of multi-occasion multi-grid data: An application of the OVERALS algorithm

Jones L & A determination of children's safety attitudes utilising

Ingham A modified repertory grids

Chiari G & The role of acceptance in interpersonal (including

Nuzzo M L psychotherapeutic) relationships

Cromwell R L More on trauma, element elaboration, and sequelae

Langelle C &

Sewell K W

Messic-Rossotti N An elaboration of the theme of trust

Almagor R Constructing power to strengthen autonomy: Self-narratives

Kalekin-Fishman of heads of organisations

Metzler A E Personal construct Clearinghouse: Anticipating the future

Epting F &

Leitner L

Savage D Friendly strategies for exploring motive constructs of groups

Gatti-Doyle F Dreams and other stories: Introspection and reconstruction

Burr V PCP and the body

Butt T Embodied sociality

Leitner L & Constructs processes, and persons: On constructing the

Gordon L unconstruable

D'Avanzo K A constructivist approach to clinical judgement processes:

Papouchis N Therapist's epistemological styles, world view

Allen R & orientations, and professional discipline (Ph.D., M.D., &

Kose G M.S.W.)

Neimeyer G.J & Personal epistemology and therapeutic preference

Morton R

Savage D J Extending technology, enhancing accessibility

Vogel D G Extending the theory: Elaborating a PCT approach to representation and symbolic action

Sloan P K How do I remember: The relationships between constructs and recall memory

Segura J Esquemas mnesicos y recuperacion de recuerdosen jueces deportivos: Una descriptcion constructivista

Feixas G (Convenor): From personal constructs to family constructs

O'Sullivan B How matters appear to the other person

Kompf M & Stefan C Anticipation and reflection: Non-prophet activities

Stevens C George Kelly: Radical constructivist, realist but not cognitivist? Reconsidering constructs on constructivism

Zumaya M PCP psicoterapia sexual y de pareja: Una propuesta integrativa

Echevarria R La dialectica entre objetivismo y constuctivismo en la obra de Freud

Oades L Constructing narratives of social anxiety

Boker H Self and object-relations of affective psychoses: A clinical study with the repertory grid technique

Tooth B Factors identified by consumers in their recovery from schizophrenia

Vogel D G On the construction of delusions: A narrative approach

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