

Australasian Personal Construct Newsletter

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The newsletter of the
APS Personal Construct Interest Group
and the
Australasian Personal Construct Group

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From the editorial couch....

Sorry this is coming out of time - too late for September and earlier than usual for December, but the combination of my commitments and Peter's didn't quite synchronize. So we have a bumper edition.

Venice was a relatively large conference, over 200, with more Australians attending than Americans - and Mary Hedges from New Zealand also. Being on the island of San Servolo (see later photo) got us out of the tourist crush, but within easy ferry access of San Marco. The Biennale was on all over Venice. I've included a picture of me, walking among something resembling construct hierarchies and webs, and Sue Watson and David Winter in the Egyptian pavilion. Those of you with eagle eyes will notice Malcolm Cross in the photo of the sex symposium. The surprise participant referred to was Dennis Hinkle, whose paper I read.

As to conferences:

2010

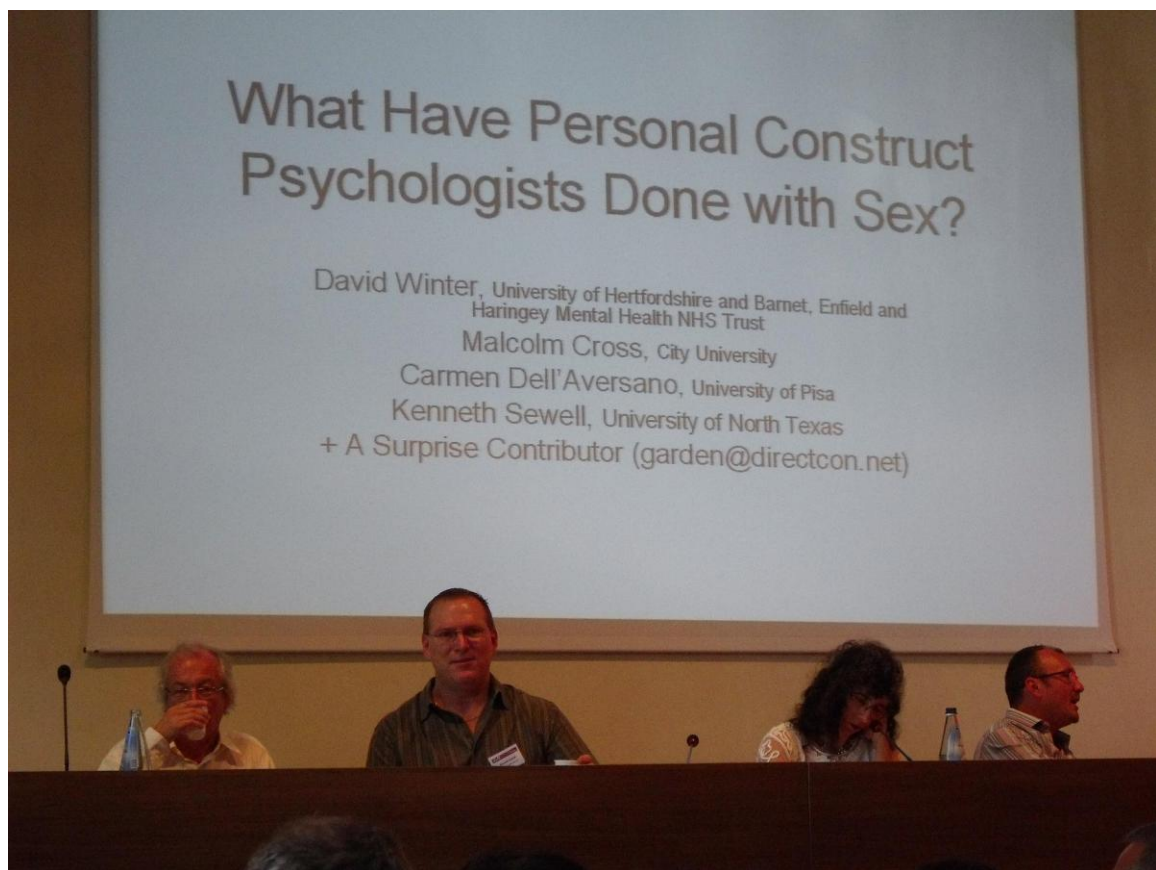
EPCA is in Belgrade, Serbia where there are a large number of students working predominantly with Dusan Stojnov - see later in the newsletter for details.

(continued page 3)

Venice Conference report

As most of you will know, this year's International Congress was held in Venice. For me, it was mostly a chance to catch up with some wonderful people I'd met at the previous two congresses – two years ago in Brisbane, and four years ago in Columbus. These included Richard Butler, David Green, Harry Procter, Joern Scheer (of course!), David Winter, Trevor Butt, Viv Burr, Jerald Forster, Spencer McWilliams and Ken Sewell. And that's not counting those I didn't get to catch up with!

Then there were the new (to me) faces... Carmen Dell'Aversano, Dusan Stojnov, Mary Frances, and Massimo Giliberto... to name but a few. There were wonderful workshops and symposia to attend, as well as some very interesting papers and posters. And who can forget the plenaries, especially one entitled "What have personal Construct Psychologists done with sex?"



As well as learning a lot at the conference in Venice, we had a lot of fun! Monday night was welcome drinks, attended by many, with some lovely food to accompany the drinks. Lots of people then took the opportunity to take the vaporetto into "town" for dinner. Tuesday night was "Creative Construing" with a program packed full of wonderful performers. Included were many Aussies: Chris Currey recited a poem of her own creation, Heather Foster used the electric piano to accompany Viv Burr's beautiful singing, then she and I (Desley) played a couple of duets (most notably Peter Sculthorpe's "Left Bank Waltz"). I also accompanied the wonderful Harry Procter while he played his clarinet. Bill Warren did an amazing job of singing. After a

drunken moment on Monday night, my husband Bob suddenly appeared on the program, accompanying Richard Butler and David Green.

Other performances of note were the jazz ensemble, consisting of Viv, Harry, Joern and Dennis (Burr), Ken Sewell's rendition of "Hog Wild" (to the tune of "High Hopes"), and Massimo Giliberto's "band" – complete with screaming female fans! I'm sure if anyone is interested in the photos Joern would be happy to supply the link to them.

Wednesday afternoon was a "free" afternoon, so people went in many directions. Murano was a popular destination (about 45 minutes in the vaporetto), as was the Lido – many conference participants ducked over there for a swim on more than one occasion, including Dave Green and Trevor Butt.

Thursday night was the conference dinner. We caught the vaporetto into Venice, and then were led on a merry jaunt through the city to our restaurant. Has anyone SEEN so many courses? Wow! Everyone had a wonderful time, and then we were transported back to San Servolo by water taxi. Unfortunately, Friday was going home day for many people – the week went way too quickly for all of us! I don't know about anyone else, but I am very excited about a few of the upcoming conferences. There is Belgrade in April, and then Niagara Falls (OMG!!!) in July. Miller Mair is presenting at Niagara Falls! Also at Niagara Falls will be some SPECTACULAR scenery! If you haven't been there, I highly recommend it.

Unfortunately, two months down the track life is back to "normal", but it has been wonderful to revisit the conference for a little while. See you all soon, I hope

Desley Hennessy

From the editorial couch.... (continued)

- NAPCN is at Niagara Falls, with Miller Mair the keynote speaker.
- Our conference will be in September, somewhere in the Newcastle, Sydney, Wollongong areas.

2011

- the International Congress will be in Boston, USA. Once again, keynote speaker is Miller Mair, dates still to be announced.

Finally I should perhaps mention that I will be retiring in February, so this year's course will be the last one that has a substantial pcp emphasis, with the curriculum being revamped and my replacement seemingly a trait theorist. I will have an honorary position within the department and will continue writing and supervising.

take care,

Beverly

...and more conference pics





Release of Rep 5 and Webgrid 5

We recently received this information from Brian Gaines and Mildred Shaw:

We are pleased to announce that Rep 5 and WebGrid 5 are now released and available. Details at:- <http://repgrid.com> which has links to the manuals on the web and in PDF format, and to the WebGrid 5 server at the University of Calgary which are freely available. The old WebGrid III server has now retired (the WebGrid 5 web site notes how to convert files from WebGrid III for use with WebGrid 5).

Some major new features in Rep 5 are:-

1. The RepServe web server is now part of Rep 5 enabling WebGrid to be offered on the local machine, on private networks and across the Internet. In particular, this supports grid elicitation through web clients taking full advantage of the widespread experience of using web browsers, their multimedia capabilities, and their support for remote data collection across the web. The grid files saved from WebGrid are compatible with all the Rep 5 editing and analysis tools. The web server is scriptable in the RepScript programming language, and users can modify the supplied WebGrid scripts, translating them into other languages and customizing them for their own purposes.
2. The RepScript scripting language used in previous versions to support interactive grid elicitation has been standardized and documented to provide an open-architecture application program interface to Rep 5s. RepScript is a powerful object-oriented programming language with specialist libraries for creating and analyzing grids and nets. It also includes string-processing, graphics, XML and statistical libraries.

3. Three-dimensional plotting capabilities have been added for the graphic output of the PrinGrid principal components analysis and the CrossPlot presentation tool.
4. The capability has been added to collect additional data items and store them in grid files. This is particularly useful in geographically distributed studies where additional data needs to be collected that complements that in the grid.
5. Additional data types are supported in grids, including labeled categories, integers and numbers providing richer capabilities for knowledge representation, modeling and management.
6. The RepNet visual language component has been substantially enhanced with additional link types, the ability to represent a node's state with visual markers, and a scripting language enabling interaction with nets of nodes and links to be programmed. A sample script implementing Kelly's theoretical psychology and modeling anticipatory processes in construct net conceptual models is provided.

The single manual for Rep IV has now exploded to six manuals for Rep 5, providing the documentation needed by others to take advantage of the open-architecture design and customize and extend Rep 5 for their own purposes.

The Personal version of Rep IV remains freely available and we hope there will be a similar version of Rep 5 available by the end of the year.

This release has been a long time coming because of the extensive coding, documentation and testing required. Making something as complex as WebGrid generally available on many machines was a daunting task, and one that we never dreamt of when we developed WebGrid I back in 1994. That was prior to the commercialization of the web, and WebGrid seems to have become the longest continuously available web service over the past 15 years. However, it is a big step from being able to keep one server going through personal attention, to releasing the server and code for others to customize and enhance. We look forward to seeing what is done with it, as we complete the first decade of our thoroughly enjoyable retirement.

kindest regards, Brian & Mildred

Dr Brian R Gaines
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Minutes of meetings

Joint meeting of the APS Personal Construct Interest Group and the Australasian Personal Construct Group.

Date: Tuesday 21st July, 2009 from 18.20-19.00

Location: San Servolo, Venice, Italy at the 18th International Congress on Personal Construct Psychology

Present: Richard Bell, Carole Carter, Angela Ebert, Bob Green, Lis Lane, Bronwyn Seaborn, Deborah Truneckova, Yasmin van Kasten, Beverly Walker (minute taker), Bill Warren.

Agenda:

1. Welcome from President
2. Apologies: Barbara Tooth
3. Chair's report: Nothing to report other than what is on the agenda
4. Treasurer's Report: The report has been delayed due to difficulties in accessing the new system at the APS, but the treasurer will report to the next committee meeting and this can be circulated via the newsletter.
5. Newsletter Editor's report: Beverly reported that the new system was working well from her perspective but that the new collaboration with Peter Prisgrove should perhaps be formalised as a co-editorship.
6. Next Australasian Conference: It is proposed that the next conference be small – one day - and be held either the day before or the day after the International Conference on Applied Psychology, to be held in Melbourne in July, 2010. Paula Eustace and Richard Bell had agreed to organise it. A symposium will be arranged for the Applied conference.
7. Future International Congress: Discussion about whether to host the 2012 International Congress and it was thought that if we did it should be in Sydney. The meeting confirmed that we were not in a position to organise the conference after the Boston International in 2010, though people thought this was most regrettable and so we would relinquish this possibility.
8. Election of Office Bearers: All current office bearers and committee members renominated. No other nominations received so all duly elected.

Convenor Richard Bell

Treasurer Bill Warren

Secretary Barbara Tooth

Committee	WA	Peter Prisgrove
	Vict	Paula Eustace (co-opted)
	SA	Nicole Rossotti
	NSW	Miram Stein
	Qld	Bob Green (co-opted)

Newsletter Editor Peter Prisgrove & Beverly Walker

APS Personal Construct Psychology Interest Group committee meeting - (Teleconference)

23 November 2009

Present: Richard Bell (chair), Bill Warren, Beverly Walker, Barbara Tooth (minutes), Peter Prisgrove

Apologies: Miriam Stein, Nicole Rossotti

Meeting opened: 12.30 pm

Agenda:

1. Treasurers Report

Bill verbally tabled the financial report. The APS money is to be used to support invited speakers for our Bi-annual Australasian PCP conference in 2010.

2. All in the Mind ABC Radio National

Beverly has contacted by Anita from All in the Mind. She plans to research the history of PCP and the works of George Kelly. Different people may be contacted by Anita for any information they have.

3. Symposium International Applied Psychology Conference July 2010

Ten expressions of interest were received in response to Beverly's email about the symposium. After some discussion it was decided the proposals would not satisfy the requirements for the symposium. However they would be excellent conference papers.

Action: Beverly will contact the people who submitted expressions of interest, inform them of the outcome and suggest presenting papers at the conference next year.

4. Australasian Conference 2010

Paula will not be available next year to organise the conference in Melbourne. Jamberoo, Wollongong, Sydney and the Hunter Valley were discussed as alternate venues. The session break in September was suggested as a good time for the conference.

Action: Committee to sound out overseas people who may be interested in attending as well as people who may be interested organising the conference. A teleconference will be organised for the last week in January to clarify the parameters for the Australasian conference.

Meeting closed 12.55 pm.

Hats off to Larry!

It was wonderful to hear that the Society for Humanistic Psychology (Division 32) of the American Psychological Association has presented the Rollo May Award for 2009 to Professor Larry Leitner. This award is given to an individual 'for independent and outstanding pursuit of new frontiers in humanistic psychology.' Previous recipients of the award are:

1996 James F. T. Bugental
1997 Carmi Harari
1998 Thomas Szasz
2000 Maurice Friedman
2001 Ernest Keen
2003 Amedeo Giorgi
2004 Kirk J. Schneider
2006 Alvin R. Mahrer
2007 Arthur Bohart
2009 Larry Leitner

New books

There are two new books that will be of interest to PCP readers:

Larry Leitner & Jill Thomas

Personal Constructivism: Theory and Applications

New York: Pace University Press

Paperback, 431 pp, Price: 40\$

Gabriele Chiari & Maria Laura Nuzzo

Constructivist Psychotherapy - A narrative hermeneutic approach

London, New York: Routledge

Paperback, 214 pp. Price: \$ 35.25 / £ 20.99

For more information, go to Joern's website.

Get on to the CI!

If you are not on the (free) subscription list for the Constructive Interventionist, you are missing a really substantial source of interesting news and views on PCP.

Contact Nick Reed at the University of Hertfordshire at info@grid-pcp.co.uk

Media star shines

Richard Bell recently alerted Australian PCPers to the media star in our presence – noting the attached link to a story about the work of David Winter on serial killers [though it doesn't have the twin photos of Ian Brady and David Winter that the paper did in the Saturday Melbourne Age]

<http://www.theage.com.au/national/into-the-dark-exploring-the-mind-of-a-serial-killer-20091030-hpwa.html>

It might be the largest public airing George Kelly has ever had!

PCT&P Journal

If you were a subscriber to the online journal Personal Construct Theory and Practice, you would have received this information recently - so if you didn't get it, maybe you should subscribe?

We would like to inform you that there are three new articles online in our online journal "Personal Construct Theory & Practice".

- David Lester: Emotions in personal construct theory: A review. Personal Construct Theory & Practice, 6, 90-98, 2009
- Peter Farrell: Cultural and symbolic leadership - What does it look like? Personal reflection and the effective management and leadership of a small rural school. Personal Construct Theory & Practice, 6, 99-108, 2009.
- Spencer McWilliams: William James' pragmatism and PCP. Personal Construct Theory & Practice, 6, 109-119, 2009.

We would also like to call your attention to the PCP NewsBlog at: <http://www.pcp-net.de/info/news.html>, and to a couple of new books on PCP and related areas as documented here: <http://www.pcp-net.de/info/newbooks.html>

As we regularly inform subscribers about new articles, please let us know if your email address happens to change.

Kind regards,

Jörn Scheer and Trevor Butt

Meetings, Workshops, Conferences

For an up-to-date outline of European workshops, meetings and conferences, consult Joern Scheer's news blog www.pcp-net.de The following are just the ones for which action is needed quite soon.

10th European Conference on Personal Construct Psychology "Keeping up with the future: PCP in an accelerating world"

Second Call for Papers

We have the privilege to invite you to the 10th Conference of the European Personal Construct Association which will take place in Belgrade, Serbia, from 9th to 12th April 2010. The aim of the conference is to attract academics, researchers, practitioners, students, and everyone interested in the exciting field of constructivist psychology. We are looking forward to a variety of contributions from across Europe, developing our understanding of constructivism and its many applications.

We hope that Belgrade's location on the crossroads between East and West will inspire you to explore many different themes on PCP in this accelerating world. We look forward to welcoming you and hope that you will not miss this opportunity for a unique constructivist experience in Belgrade.

The deadline for submitting paper abstracts is **January 18th, 2010**.

Please find more information on <http://epca-net.org/epcacongress10>

News from the West

We enjoyed a quiet winter in WA PCP as we all wrapped up warm, made sure we'd put the mini-umbrella back in the glove-box, and dreamt of sunnier times ahead. I was at a music workshop at the beginning of spring and as we all sat out back in the sunshine during the afternoon break we noticed the clouds of flying white-ants relocating to their new homes - from which we shared the view that the season had definitely changed. Since then, of course we have reverted back to winter a couple of times but the hat and sunscreen are finally being crammed on top of the mini-umbrella in the glovebox.

Our winter interest group meeting was both interesting and moving as Nick Gerrish presented his PhD research on the use of the biographical grid method as a way of investigating maternal adjustment to the death of a child. He presented some of the same material at the Brisbane conference but this was a chance for a more interactive exploration.

Our most recent interest group meeting was on using pictures in PCP work, which I have written an account of below. At that meeting it emerged that several people were doing things for Psychology Week. And all this without a hint of self-congratulation.

Using pictures in PCP work

The final meeting (apart from the end-of-year knees-up) of the WA interest group this year was planned to be an exploration of the use of pictorial materials for eliciting constructs. In fact our discussion ranged a bit more widely than this, discussing the use of pictures in group-work, assessment and therapy generally. I volunteered to make a record of our session but of course, personal constructs being what they are, this account may not accord with everyone's recollections and interpretations.

Rather than having one presenter (which we have enjoyed a couple of years ago, when Elaine Atkinson presented her approach to using pictorial materials in therapy) we went for "show and tell" and everyone who used pictures in their clinical work described their approach and showed us their pictures. I saw the session as somewhat of a creativity cycle, as we firstly opened up the discussion to a variety of perspectives and then tightened somewhat, looking for themes and conclusions.

One of the first points raised was a reminder that construing is not a purely verbal process, in fact probably not significantly verbal, with words coming in later in order to reflect on the process and to communicate it to others. Someone suggested that the proposition that a picture is worth a thousand words probably gets the balance about right. The idea that pictures used the right hemisphere and hence accessed meanings of a more liberated kind (and perhaps a deeper understanding) was also proposed, which of course links to therapeutic strategies involving asking clients to draw things (e.g. draw your dream) and to engage in artistic expression more generally.

The pictures that people used varied quite widely. Some people used cartoon faces expressing various emotions, and these included the emoticons that we see so often in our emails and photocopied cartoon faces that could have been drawn by a child (or a skilful therapist?). Other people used laminated pictures (about a quarter A4 size) of a wide range of people and situations. Some of these comprised art-works, some from magazines and other sources. I once used sets of head and torso pictures culled from magazines.

People said that they used pictures in various ways, with various client groups and for various purposes. The contexts included child and adult assessments, therapy with individual children and adults (including in a cross-cultural context), group-work with young people with eating disorders and adult personal development groups. Uses included eliciting constructs, stimulating discussion and exploring ideas, demonstrating individual differences to encourage tolerance and understanding of others, and more.

We agreed that pictures seem to engage clients in a very direct way, a potentially non-threatening way and a less culturally bound way. They allow clients to externalize therapy issues, and so work with them with lowered arousal and less defensiveness. We discussed whether using pictures could be somewhat manipulative on the part of the therapist - a form of trickery to circumvent the client's defenses. My conclusion here was that it could be manipulative, although it need not be - the therapist could be quite open about why pictures were useful in therapy. This led to a discussion about the differences between a PCP use of pictures and the strategies of projective testing, and it was put forward that the main difference was that projective testing was a process in which the therapist interpreted and used the outcomes in a private way rather than as a joint process of open exploration with the client.

There were many other interesting points raised in our discussion, some of which I noted but wasn't sure how to introduce in this brief account and others which were not noted, probably due to me eating some of the rather nice bun that Anne had brought along to keep wolves from doors and blood sugar levels within proper limits. All in all, another enjoyable and interesting meeting of the WA interest group.

Peter Prisgrove

PCP colleagues honoured by UKCP

Friends in Australasia may be interested to hear that at the recent AGM of the United Kingdom Council for Psychotherapy, two of our colleagues were honoured with Fellowships.



Alan Thomson's award was in recognition of his many years of service to the organisation, as Vice Chair and Acting Chair through very difficult times. Many friends and colleagues were delighted to be able to congratulate Alan and were reminded how much they have appreciated his work over the years.



Joady Brennan was also awarded a Fellowship, after many years of work on a variety of committees and chairing the Equality and Diversity Committee keeping the spotlight on inclusive practice. She accepted the honour as a recognition that the Equalities Agenda is so important and is one to which many people have committed enormous amounts of time and energy and creativity and hope.

We owe a huge debt of gratitude to Alan and Joady for keeping the PCP flag flying in the UK psychotherapy scene. You can read interviews with them via the news page of the PCPA website at www.pcpassociation.net

Mary Frances
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