

NAPCN98 Presentation #1

Differentiating Between Individuals in Impression Formation

Jack Adams-Webber
Brock University

Thirty undergraduates (17 men, 16 women) rated two new acquaintances on 30 bipolar constructs (e.g., optimistic/pessimistic) following a brief interaction with them. They were assigned to opposite poles with an average relative frequency of 0.38. This finding has interesting implications in terms of Frank's "strikingness hypothesis".

NAPCN98 Presentation #2

Changes in Construct Systems of Recovering Psychiatric Patients

Robert Adelman
Texas A&M - Commerce

The current study explored the possibility of change in the construct systems of nine psychiatric patients in the course of hospital treatment. The patients were assessed through a version of the Kelly Repertory Grid on two occasions. Changes in the structure and content of patients' construct systems were noted for eight of the nine patients between occasions of the grid.

NAPCN98 Presentation #3

Nonlinear analysis of autonomic behavior: Efforts toward a metric to detect index and represent perturbations.

Luis Felipe Amunátegui
Cleveland State University

A paradigm based on critical constructivism and autopoiesis can advance the application of dynamic systems theory to empirical research in psychology. Perturbations, what an organism admits from a transaction with the environment, are the unit of study within this framework. Perturbations can be studied through the nonlinear representation and analysis of cumulative records of continuous signals. This approach has demonstrated initial suitability to detect index and represent perturbational activity related to constraints to attend to self-relevant information.

NAPCN98 Presentation #4

Metaphors of the Self: Into the Quagmire

Marla Arvay, Ph.D.
University of Victoria

Marie Hoskins, Ph. D.
University of Victoria

What does it mean to be a self living in a postmodern world? What does it mean to have a personal theory of self given the multiple, transitory and evolving concepts within constructivist self theory? How do culture and gender impact on current theories of the self? The focus of this workshop will be an exploration of these questions. The presenters will also include an overview of their current research on this topic and discuss implications for future research and therapy.

NAPCN98 Presentation #5

Experiential Personal Construct Theory and Existential-Integrative Theory: The Monozygotic Twin Study

Michael M. Butler
Miami University

George Kelly's (1955) personal construct theory (PCT) revolves around the idea of constructs. Experiential personal construct theory (EPCT) takes the idea of constructs and focuses on the part that intimate relationships (termed ROLE by Leitner, "The awful, awful nature of ROLE relationships", 1995) play in the human experience. Existential-integrative theory (EI) (Schneider et al., 1995) divides human experience into six fields, the most important and core field being the experiential field. EPCT and EI are compared and a special kindred relationship is hypothesized. Furthermore, the implications of this relationship are explored, such as EPCT being viewed as a form of existential therapy as well as the parent theory, PCT, which Kelly himself often denied.

NAPCN98 Presentation #6

Keynote Address
Rue L. Cromwell, Ph.D.
University of Kansas

Author of over 100 articles and chapters on schizophrenia, depression, and constructivist understanding of trauma; editor of *Schizophrenia: Origins, Processes, Treatment, and Outcome*

Keynote Topic: A Tale of Two Stimuli: An Integrated Constructivist Theory of Psychopathology

Rue L. Cromwell, Ph.D., is the M. Erik Wright Distinguished Professor of Clinical Psychology at the University of Kansas. He received his M.A. and Ph.D. in clinical psychology at the Ohio State University, completing a thesis with George A. Kelly in personal construct theory. His research has led to three books, one on stress and treatment of heart attacks and two on schizophrenia. He has also published over 100 research articles covering aspects of mental retardation, hyperactivity, personal construct theory, schizophrenia, depression, trauma reactions, and other aspects of psychopathology. Dr. Cromwell has served on several research committees at the National Institute of Mental Health, U. S. Office of Education, and National Institute of Child Health and Human Development. More recently he chaired the Task Force on Psychopathology and Mental Health for the Human Capital Initiative, a document on national research priorities being submitted to Congress and the nation.

NAPCN98 Presentation #7

Promoting Self-Awareness and Role Elaboration: Using Repertory Grids to Facilitate Theatrical Character Development

Keith R. Cruise
University of North Texas

Kenneth W. Sewell
University of North Texas

This presentation reports the novel use of the repertory grid technique with a group of adolescent high school drama students involved in a theater production of The Boys Next Door. Repertory grids were completed across three time periods to achieve three separate objectives: (1) explore the relationship between the Self and Character Role; (2) promote the concept of sociality among cast members and important character relationships; and (3) investigate similarities/differences in cast members' constructions of each other as characters versus as actors. Qualitative examples as well as illustrative repertory grid patterns will be discussed regarding each objective. Analogue implications for promotion of individual self awareness and group psychotherapy will also be discussed.

NAPCN98 Presentation #8

Personal Construct Methodology: A Philo Cafe

Franz R. Epting
University of Florida

The purpose of this informal meeting will be to facilitate a ever deepening discussion of what methodologies might be derived from Personal Construct Psychology (PCT). The presenter will briefly review past attempts such as those proposed by Linda Viney, and then present his own outline of a new methodology and specific methods derived from PCT. This is to be a methodology with is seen as an alternative to Natural Science methods and methodology. The presentation will be very brief and is only to serve as a springboard for the conversation. The presenter will serve as an animator or facilitator of the discussion. The presentation format will be as a *Philo Cafe*, which is a relaxed informal discussion with the presenter over a designated area of interest. The session is held late in the afternoon at 'drinks' time where the participants have access to refreshments and can comfortably enter into dialogue with the presenter and other group members concerning the issue at hand.

NAPCN98 Presentation #9

Constructivism, Sexuality, and Meaning

Franz R. Epting
University of Florida

Jonathan D. Raskin
State University of New York at New Paltz

This paper de-emphasizes causal explanations of homosexuality and refocuses on personal meanings and sexuality. Biological and social constructionist approaches often neglect human meaning, resulting in preemptive sexual labels that detract from humanness. Sexual Selves are valuable as sociopolitical statements and lived experiences that need not preempt overall conceptions of personhood.

NAPCN98 Presentation #10

Domain-Specific Cognitive Complexity in Survivors of Child Abuse

Christopher Russell Erbes
Texas Tech University

Stephanie Lewis Harter
Texas Tech University

Domain-specific cognitive complexity for self and for abusive and nonabusive family situations is compared for participants from abusive and nonabusive families. Predicted relationships between experience and complexity were not found. Exploratory analyses indicated greater self-complexity for participants with a history of sexual abuse. Discussion includes methodological and theoretical implications.

NAPCN98 Presentation #11

Is it Possible to Transcend the Construing Process During Meditation?

Jerald R. Forster
University of Washington

It is suggested that people construe when they interpret phenomena using personal constructs, but that they can meditate without using personal constructs. In this qualitative study, the experiences reported by meditators were studied to detect non-dualistic awareness, a process not mediated by personal constructs. Several theoretical and methodological issues connected with studies of this type will be discussed.

NAPCN98 Presentation #12

Socio-Cultural Implications of Personal Construct Psychology

Brian R Gaines
University of Calgary

Mildred L G Shaw
University of Calgary

This article explores socio-cultural models of group, organizational and societal processes based on the foundations of personal construct psychology. In particular, it analyzes the constructs of major systemic sociologists such as those underlying Gidden's (1979) notion of a locale, an environment providing affordances for certain forms of social behavior, and those underlying Luhman's (1995, orig.1984) notions of socialization.

NAPCN98 Presentation #13

How Grievors Construe Adverse Funeral Events

Louis A. Gamino
Scott & White Clinic, Temple, Texas

Kenneth W. Sewell
University of North Texas

Larry A. Easterling
Scott & White Clinic, Temple, Texas

Seventy-four mourners were studied for how their experiences with funeral services for their loved ones influenced later scores on the Grief Experience Inventory (GEI). Those who experienced the funeral as “comforting” and/or participated in planning the funeral reported less grief misery later. A high incidence (43%) of “adverse events” was found to occur during the funerals contributing, for some mourners, to a construction of the funeral as “not comforting.” Differing types of adverse events, as well as differing ways in which such events are experienced and construed, will be described and illustrated. These generalizations are proposed as helpful to grief therapists and funeral directors in assisting mourners to be vigilant toward such adversities and to optimize the healing potential of funerary rituals via proactive anticipation.

NAPCN98 Presentation #14

Challenging Roles of the Constructive Therapist: Expert and Agent of Social Responsibility

Donald K. Granvold
University of Texas at Arlington

Sharing specific expertise with clients and fulfilling the role of agent of social responsibility may be challenging to the therapist practicing from a constructivist perspective. The goals of this session are to provide participants an opportunity to discuss these roles and to define constructivist approaches to satisfy them.

NAPCN98 Presentation #15

Interpersonal Experiences in Sport: Reflections on the Use of Autobiographical Narrative

William Haefele
Rockhurst College

Melanie Ruda
Rockhurst College

Benjamin Kuster
Rockhurst College

Autobiographical narratives were examined in terms of the quality of interpersonal experiences in the context of sports participation. Relationships with coaches, team members, and parents were examined. Narrative excerpts will be presented. Reflections on the use of qualitative methods will be provided using a Personal Construct framework.

NAPCN98 Presentation #16

Evaluating the Emergent Poles of Personal Constructs

Chad L. Hagans
University of Florida

Jack Adams-Webber
Brock University

Personal constructs were elicited from 145 women and 58 men with varying formats, and they evaluated the emergent poles as positive or negative. The proportion of emergent poles evaluated positively across different elicitation formats was approximately 0.62. Implications of this finding were discussed in terms of Frank's "strikingness hypothesis".

NAPCN98 Presentation #17

Quantitative measures of construing in child abuse survivors

Stephanie Lewis Harter
Texas Tech University

Quantitative aspects of construing associated with long term effects of childhood abuse are examined within a personal construct theory framework.. Indices of negative self construing, reduced identification, and extremity are compared from the elicited Repertory Grids of survivors of sexual, physical, and emotional abuse and nonabused controls (N = 336).

NAPCN98 Presentation #18

Content analysis of the personal constructs of female sexual abuse survivors

Stephanie Lewis Harter
Texas Tech University

Christopher Russell Erbes
Texas Tech University

Christine C. Hart
Texas Tech University

Construct contents of female sexual abuse survivors and nonabused women were compared using Landfield's system. Constructs of abused women were discriminated by fewer references to emotional arousal, low forcefulness, and high morality and by increased concrete, factual descriptions. Reduced content involving emotional arousal was particularly related to increased symptom distress.

NAPCN98 Presentation #19

Mobilization versus Paralysis: Construction of Meaning in the Face of Mortality

Marjorie Hatch-Woodruff
Southern Methodist University

Doxey R. Hatch
Montana State University-Billings

This paper proposes a theoretical model of how individuals construe death and how that influences their responses to it. Briefly, we argue that individuals respond to the threat death poses to their current lives using one of two general patterns: existential mobilization and existential paralysis. These patterns and their implications are described.

NAPCN98 Presentation #20

Consciousness and Constructive Concepts

J.Edward Hazelton
Meharry Medical School, Nashville, Tennessee

The International Conference on Consciousness, held at Tucson, Arizona at the end of April 1998, had leaders in psychology, mathematical physics, neurophysiology, philosophy, and other specialists, forming a very stimulating conglomeration of different disciplines, all trying to combine an explanation for consciousness. This paper will review major topics discussed at the conference, where constructivism was never mentioned, with an effort to add and blend constructivist concepts.

NAPCN98 Presentation #21

Culture and Conversation: Towards a Post-Rationalist Psychology of Meaning and Domain Relations.

Paul S. Jones BSc MSc
University of Reading

The existence and preservation of human self-identity is rooted in the social phenomenon where human existence derives from language. This paper explores the relationship between humans and technology using PCP methodology. In an attempt to move away from empiricist paradigms of technological reality, identified within the concept of science, there is the need to question what the nature of human experience is. In order to define the characteristics of human experience of technology, we need to identify the levels through which those experiences take on meaning. Empiricists accept a unique, universal reality, alike for everyone and existing independently from the observer. Rationalist investigations begin by considering the individuals forming their experiences of technology from an impartial point of view. In order to identify personal meaning about technology, we can adopt a "post-rationalist" approach by stating that, first and foremost, human existence takes place in the relational space created by conversation. As the network of conversation changes through cultural shifts, so does a person's identity change within that network, and hence, the construction of technological reality changes. Using repertory grid techniques, the kinds of subjective domain relations concerning the construction of technological reality can be described through analyzing conversational dialogue. This paper discusses the implications of this type of analysis for changing current views about technology, by treating it more as a social phenomenon with an intersubjective origin, rather than possessing an objective reality first and foremost.

NAPCN98 Presentation #22

Constructivist Assessment: Construct Definition and the Family System Test

Jack Kahn
University of Maine

Scott T. Meier
State University of New York-Buffalo

This presentation will address the results of a study that examined the Family System Test (FAST), an assessment tool created to measure perceptions of family power and cohesion. This research addressed whether participants' definition of the constructs being measured might influence their depiction of their family structure. How the level of measurement of a study is dependent on the measurement constructions of the participants will also be examined. The results of this study call for a constructivist epistemology for measurement.

NAPCN98 Presentation #23

Intervening with Substance Users in Primary Care Medical Settings: The Use of Constructivist Principles

Reid E. Klion

Indiana University School of Medicine/Indianapolis VAMC

There is a high prevalence of problem drinking patients in many public primary care settings. While these medical visits can represent an opportunity for intervention, they tend to be mutually unsatisfactory when substance abuse is aggressively confronted. This paper will outline an alternative approach that is informed by PCP and contemporary work on behavior change processes.

NAPCN98 Presentation #24

Keynote Address

Michael J. Mahoney, Ph.D.
University of North Texas

Author of numerous articles and books including *Human Change Processes*

Keynote Topic: **Constructivism Throughout Human Science: Psychotherapy, Chaos, and Other Frontiers**

Michael J. Mahoney, Ph.D. has been at the forefront of psychotherapy theory for the past 20 years, first in the cognitive revolution and now via constructivist frameworks. His extensive background in philosophy and psychological theory provides a base for stimulating and informative coverage of constructivism and self-organization. He has authored or co-authored numerous books and articles, including *Human Change Processes* in 1991, *Cognitive and Constructive Psychotherapies: Theory, Research, and Practice* in 1995, and *Constructivism in Psychotherapy*, which he co-edited with Robert Neimeyer in 1995. Recently, Dr. Mahoney founded the Society for Constructivism in the Human Sciences, and currently serves as executive director for that organization. Dr. Mahoney's present work includes studies of the personal lives and self-care processes of psychotherapists, embodiment issues in psychotherapy/personal-growth, and chaotic conceptions of human change.

NAPCN98 Presentation #25

Special Cases in Validation

Jason McCray
Miami University

Through exploring ideas about validation and invalidation within the framework of Leitner's (1988) Experiential Personal Constructivism I have identified several noteworthy cases that deserve special attention. I explore the notions of a "positive invalidation", "negative validation", "false invalidation", and "false validation" in some depth.

NAPCN98 Presentation #26

The Creativity Cycle and Interpersonal Relations

Jason A. McCray & Cyd T. Goodman
Miami University

Kelly's (1955) creativity cycle is a key aspect of the person as a kinetic process. There are numerous ways in which the creativity cycle of each participant in a relationship effects the living interaction between them. Several of these ways are examined and there is some speculation on where future elaborations may lead.

NAPCN98 Presentation #27

Vocational Differentiation for Familiar, Disliked, and Preferred Occupations

Robert H. Mole
The University of Calgary

Vocational differentiation was measured on repertory grids for familiar, disliked, and preferred occupations. Planned comparisons revealed that both familiar and disliked occupations appear to be significantly higher in differentiation than preferred occupations. This provides support for both the vigilance and familiarity hypotheses. Qualitative data revealed other possible explanations for differentiation.

NAPCN98 Presentation #28

Keynote Address

Maureen O'Hara, Ph.D.

Dean of Faculty at Saybrook Graduate School, San Francisco

Author of numerous articles, such as *Constructing Emancipatory Realities*, *Psychotherapy's Own Identity Crisis*, and *Is it Time for Clinical Psychology to Deconstruct Constructivism?*

Keynote Topic: **Constructivism in Feminist Psychotherapies**

Maureen O'Hara, Ph.D., MFCC, is a pioneer in relational approaches. A long-time colleague of Carl Rogers with whom she helped develop the Person-Centered Approach, she combines feminism, developmental constructivism, and humanistic psychology to create a relational humanist psychotherapy. A dynamic speaker, Dr. O'Hara regularly presents on leading-edge issues in gender relations and organizational psychology. She is a Founding Fellow and Board Member of the Meridian International Institute on Governance, Leadership, Learning, and the Future, a distinguished clinical member of the California Association for Marriage and Family Therapy, and a prolific writer and video producer. Dr. O'Hara's current work is aimed at prevention of mental health problems through personal, institutional, and cultural change. A recognized leader in the psychology of human relationships, Dr. O'Hara has a private practice as a marriage and family therapist in California

NAPCN98 Presentation #29

The Construction of Disorder as Human Enterprise

Jonathan D. Raskin
State University of New York at New Paltz

Adam M. Lewandowski
State University of New York at New Paltz

Human meaning-making is central in developing systems for defining psychological abnormality. Critics err in identifying human negotiation as a flaw in DSM-IV's development. Doing so perpetuates assumptions that objective inquiry reveals true-to-life disorder entities. This creates deeply embedded clinical "realities," minimizes acts of meaning, and discourages alternative conceptualizations of disorder

NAPCN98 Presentation #30

Using WebGrid-II to Support Exchange and Comparison of Construct Systems in
Communities on the World Wide Web

Mildred L G Shaw
University of Calgary

Brian R Gaines
University of Calgary

This presentation is intended as a short tutorial for those interested in using WebGrid-II to support exchange and comparison of construct systems in communities on the World Wide Web, and will demonstrate how to use the system in practical applications.

NAPCN98 Presentation #31

Mirror-time: Empirical Findings and Implications for a Constructivist Psychotherapeutic Technique

Amy Moes Williams, Ph.D.
Center for Trauma Recovery,
University of Missouri-St. Louis

Nancy S. Diehl, M.S.
University of South Carolina Medical Center

Michael J. Mahoney, Ph.D.
University of North Texas

Mirror-time has been discussed as a technique to enhance self exploration. The current study (N=100) used a 2 (gender) by 2 (background music/guiding voice) design to investigate the mirror-time phenomenon. Physiological, questionnaire, and free-response data were collected. Results and implications of findings will be discussed.

NAPCN98 Presentation #32

A Constructivist Approach to Sex Therapy with Couples

Mario Zumaya, MD
Mexico City, Mexico

Sara K. Bridges
University of Memphis

This presentation will explore a systemic-constructivist approach to integrative sexual and couple psychotherapy that encourages in-depth exploration of sexual meanings and their impact on the couple relationship. Four aspects of sexuality (gender, eroticism, interpersonal bonding and reproductivity) and their interactions will be discussed as a way of conceptualizing sexual meanings.