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24th INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF PERSONAL CONSTRUCT PSYCHOLOGY

Padua, 13th-16th July, 2022

CONFERENCE HANDBOOK



Università di Padova
Centro Linguistico di Ateneo
via Venezia, 16 – 35131 Padova

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ORGANISING COMMITTEE



Sabrina Cipolletta (University of Padua, Italy) is an associate professor in the Department of General Psychology at the University of Padua (Italy) and a personal construct psychotherapist. She is the director of PsyMed, a research laboratory of health psychology, and of a clinical service at the Center of clinical services of the University of Padua. She is authors of many articles and books in the field of personal construct psychology mainly applied to interpersonal relationships and health. She is also a member of the editorial boards of the *Journal of Constructivist Psychology* and *Personal Construct Theory & Practice*. She is currently coordinating a new international programme in Personal Construct Psychology and Counselling.



Chiara Centomo (Institute of Narrative Constructivism ICoNa SB, Padua, Italy) is a psychologist and psychotherapist. She works with adults, adolescents and couples in Padua and online and teaches training courses for healthcare professionals. She collaborates with ICoNa (Institute of Narrative Constructivism) and she is member of the Steering Committee of the George Kelly Society. Until 2022 she was editorial director of the "Rivista Italiana di Costruttivismo". She is interested in constructivist clinical research, in particular about the relationship between metaphors and personal constructions and about corporeality.



Gabriele Chiari, MD, (Institute of Narrative Constructivism ICoNa SB, Padua, Italy) has been Lecturer in the Faculty of Psychology, University of Florence, and Co-Director from 1983 to 2021 of the School of Specialization in Constructivist-oriented Cognitive Psychotherapy, CESIPc. Presently he is Director Emeritus of ICoNa, Padua, and of SE (Centre of Narrative-Hermeneutic Constructivist Psychology and Psychotherapy), Florence. A member of the editorial boards of the *Journal of Constructivist Psychology* and *Personal Construct Theory & Practice*, and Co-Director of the e-journal *Costruttivismi*, he is Vice-President of the *George Kelly Society*. He is also the author of many articles and books on the subject of personal construct and constructivist psychology and psychotherapy.



Silvia Tomaino (University of Padua, Italy) is a licensed psychologist and a PhD candidate in Brain, Mind and Computer Science (BMCS) at the Department of General Psychology at the University of Padua. She is actively involved in research projects and clinical practice at the Psymed laboratory and at the Psychological Assistance Service (SCUP) at the University of Padua. She is author of different articles and chapters in books about health psychology and personal construct psychology.



David Winter (University of Hertfordshire, UK) is Professor Emeritus of Clinical Psychology at the University of Hertfordshire (where he was formerly Programme Director of the Doctorate in Clinical Psychology) and Director of Postgraduate Programmes at Colombo Institute of Research and Psychology. He has published extensively, primarily on personal construct psychology and psychotherapy research, and is an Associate Editor of the *Journal of Constructivist Psychology* and Research Editor of the *European Journal of Psychotherapy and Counselling*.

SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

Gabriele Chiari (Institute of Narrative Constructivism ICoNa SB, Padua, Italy)

Maria Armezzani (University of Padua, Italy)

Richard C. Bell (Melbourne School of Psychological Sciences, Australia)

Luis Botella (Ramon Llull University, Barcelona, Spain)

Vivien Burr (University of Huddersfield, UK)

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Elena Faccio (University of Padua, Italy)

Guillem Feixas (University of Barcelona, Spain)

Robert A. Neimeyer (University of Memphis, USA)

M. Cristina Ortu (Institute of Narrative Constructivism ICoNa SB, Padua, Italy)

Harry Procter (University of Hertfordshire, UK)

Jörn W. Scheer (University of Giessen, Germany)

Dušan Stojnov (University of Belgrade, Serbia)

Valeria Ugazio (University of Bergamo, Italy)

Bill Warren (University of Newcastle, Australia)

ABOUT PCP

Personal construct psychology (PCP) is the application of *personal construct theory* (PCT) to several areas of psychology, mainly but not exclusively the clinical, educational, developmental, and organisational fields, in addition to psychotherapy.

PCT starts from the phenomenological assumption that people interpret their experience of the world and themselves. It is the invention of an American psychologist, George A. Kelly (1905-1967), who presented it in 1955 in a work in two volumes, *The Psychology of Personal Constructs*, as a theory of personality mainly devoted to clinical diagnosis and psychotherapy.

Soon after its publication, Kelly's ideas aroused incomprehension and misunderstanding in the psychological community, due to their being radically different from the most popular approaches of the period – psychoanalysis and behaviourism above all. Such originality of PCT had three main consequences: the difficulty to classify PCT into the traditional schools of psychology (it has been considered a cognitive, a phenomenological, and a humanistic-existential theory, to say the least), its suffering from the external perception of a sort of intellectual isolationism, and its survival thanks to groups of fervent followers throughout the world and the organisation of international, European, North American and Australasian congresses since 1976.

In the last few decades, with the spread of psychological constructivism, PCT has been recognized as its first expression, and as the most rigorous and cutting-edge constructivist approach to psychotherapy. The theory rests on a philosophical assumption and a fundamental postulate and is composed of eleven corollaries. Being interested in how people give meaning to their experience, it can be considered a metatheory, a psychological theory about personal theories.

“All of our present interpretations of the universe are subject to revision or replacement”. This epistemological position, named by Kelly *constructive alternativism*, is contrasted with the more popular assumption of accumulative fragmentalism, according to which truth is collected piece by piece. If science advances by means of conjectures and refutations, the person-as-a-scientist – Kelly's well-known metaphor – makes something similar: asking him- or herself questions about the nature of the universe, observing the world, construing structures of meaning (the *personal constructs*), and – behaving on the basis of such interpretative hypotheses – verifying their viability and eventually revising his or her construction of experience.

The implications of such epistemological choice are rigorously carried on by Kelly, with radical changes in the view of the person, the relationship of the person with other people, the personal suffering, and the psychotherapeutic process.

The latter is not aimed at the correction of maladaptive behaviours or irrational ideas, but rather at favouring in the client the re-interpretation of personal experience.

Differently from the period in which PCT was born, nowadays, the fields of psychology and psychotherapy number many approaches which make reference to psychological constructivism, such as some cognitive perspectives, the social constructionist approach to psychotherapy, the developments of certain systemic-relational therapies, and some contemporary elaborations of psychoanalysis. However, unlike its “cousins”, PCT remains the only constructivist perspective which is not nothing but a theory, but is, in fact, a total psychology.

Lastly, worth mentioning, is an instrument of research and assessment that Kelly invented to explore personal constructs, the *repertory grid technique*, which has always interested even researchers and practitioners who are not based on personal construct theory.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER



Luis Botella

Professor at Ramon Llull University (Barcelona), and a Clinical Psychologist and Psychotherapist.

Keynote Title: Encountering the Other Through Mapping the Territory of their Meanings

ABSTRACT

Psychotherapy conceived from a constructivist and PCP standpoint has been metaphorically equated by Robert A. Neimeyer to creating an empathic bridge with the client, crossing that bridge, mapping the client's territory of meanings, and enlarging it—a metaphor that by extension characterises probably almost any meaningful human encounter. PCP has been enormously useful in the process of creating methods of mapping our clients worlds of meanings in non-prescriptive and client-centered ways, such as Repertory Grids and Self-Characterizations to name the more obvious two. At the same time, and from somewhat different domains, the use of Fuzzy Cognitive Maps (FCMs) has advanced significantly in the last decades in the study of individual and shared maps of meanings in areas such as business (for product planning and decision support), economics, education, medicine (to devise model systems and provide diagnosis and decision support systems), engineering (for modelling and control complex systems), project planning (to analyse the mutual dependencies between project resources), robotics, computer assisted learning, expert systems, and more recently in social science research—as a decision-support tool for collaborative decision-making and natural resource planning for instance. FCMs resemble standard concept maps because they are composed by a set of nodes and edges connecting them. The difference is that in an FCM nodes are understood as fuzzy sets, and weighted edges (also non-binary) as the causal relationship among the nodes they connect. A fuzzy (vs. a dichotomous or crisp) set is one in which the membership of its elements is not limited to 1 or 0 but can assume a range in the interval $[0,1]$. This presentation will focus on the extent to what FCMs and the mathematical logic they incorporate are coherent and compatible with PCP and to discuss a procedure for deriving both FCMs and Behavior Over Time Graphs from Repertory Grids (or from any other way to access the other's constructs in fact) and to use them to make sense of, plan and even simulate the psychotherapeutic process.

BIOGRAPHY

Luis Botella, PhD. is a Professor at Ramon Llull University (Barcelona), and a Clinical Psychologist and Psychotherapist. He has been an active participant in the PCP community for more than 30 years. He teaches at various national and international psychotherapy masters courses. The primary focus of his research has been to advance the understanding of human meaning making processes and the construction and reconstruction of self-identity—in general, and in psychotherapy in particular. He is the author or co-author of more than 200 publications about his research topics. In the last decade he has been focusing his research efforts on developing a method (mathematically sound and psychologically meaningful) for combining PCP and Fuzzy Logic—particularly Fuzzy Cognitive Maps—and applying it to psychotherapy. The intention of this work is to provide a sound and meaningful way of accessing the map of (inter)personal meanings, and being able to assess, anticipate, and simulate their systemic dynamics.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER



Nadia Naffi

Assistant Professor of Educational Technology at Université Laval in Quebec City, Canada.

Keynote Title: Construing the Other in a deepfake and infodemic era: A discussion with youth

ABSTRACT

In her talk, Naffi will share the preliminary results of the research project she leads to investigate how youth construe themselves and the Other in a deepfake and infodemic era. Funded by

Canadian Heritage and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC)'s Joint Initiative for Digital Citizen Research, this project examines youth' perception of the influence of disinformation, namely the deepfake phenomenon, on critical issues that matter most in our time and of their agency to counterbalance it. According to the WHO, the COVID-19-related infodemic is just as dangerous as the virus itself. Rumours, myths, and exaggerated facts fuel new forms of phobia of the Other, online, and offline. Many people of Chinese or East Asian origin were insulted, assaulted, or denied services. Religious, minority and elite groups were blamed online for its spread. Deepfakes, a specific form of disinformation that uses machine-learning algorithms to create audio and video of real people saying and doing things they never said or did, are moving quickly toward being an important vehicle of disinformation. It's expected that people will use deepfakes to cyberbully, spread hate speech, and incite violence, to name a few. Detecting and fighting this form of disinformation is of the utmost urgency.

BIOGRAPHY

Nadia Naffi is an Assistant Professor of Educational Technology at Université Laval in Quebec City, Canada. She holds the Chair in Educational Leadership in Innovative Pedagogical Practices in Digital Contexts – National Bank and co-leads the Education and Empowerment axis of the International Observatory on the Societal Impacts of AI and Digital Technologies (OBVIA).

KEYNOTE SPEAKER



Luca Vanzago

Full professor of theoretical philosophy and head of the Department of Humanities of the University of Pavia.

Keynote Title: The experience of the embodied subject: identity, alterity, relationality

ABSTRACT

The experience of the other is a complex problem that phenomenology has examined in different ways and exploiting several approaches. In particular, the emphasis laid on the role played by the embodiment of subjectivity entails the need to scrutinize the mutual effects of the experience of the other, in the double sense of the genitive: the subject experiences another subject in turn experiencing the former experiences. This complex framework opens several problems. I would like to examine these problems in the light of the analyses offered by Husserl, Heidegger, Sartre and Merleau-Ponty, focusing in particular on the latter's conception of incarnation in terms of what he calls "the flesh". The issue is how to exactly account for the otherness of the other while avoiding reducing the other to the experience made by the subject, and at the same time granting the possibility to retain its understanding. In this respect, the embodiment of experience entails the emphasis on aspects such as passivity, institution, sensibility, emotionality. A further theme implied in this framework is the peculiarity of the experience of pain, which introduces a splitting within the bodily subject itself. My intervention will try to provide a general framework in order to account for these different elements of the complex phenomenon called "otherness".

BIOGRAPHY

Luca Vanzago is full professor of theoretical philosophy and head of the Department of Humanities of the University of Pavia. He got a PhD from Katholieke Universiteit Leuven with a dissertation on Merleau-Ponty and Whitehead. His publications include ten monographs, on Husserl, Merleau-Ponty, Whitehead, the history of the concept of soul, the concept of consciousness. He has published about a hundred essays in Italian and international journals. He is a member of the Istituto Lombardo di scienze e lettere.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER



Jelena Pavlovic

Associate Professor of Organizational Development at University of Belgrade and Founder at Koučing centar.

Keynote Title: Constructivist coaching in remote workplace: Encounters of the new kind

ABSTRACT

International Coaching Federation defines coaching as partnering with clients in a thought-provoking and creative process that inspires them to maximize their personal and professional potential. The very idea of partnering, or inviting participation and authorship over both content and process in a coaching conversation, seem to be linked with constructivist psychology. When these constructivist underpinnings are fully supported by the theoretical principles and tools of constructivist psychology, coaching may become an encounter that really matters. One context which is particularly suited for the constructivist coaching encounters is remote workplace. Remote workplaces can benefit from constructivist coaching in at least three ways: (1) online coaching for individual employees; (2) team coaching online; and (3) online training leaders as coaches. When applied to individual coaching in remote workplace, constructivist coaching becomes a powerful tool for personal transformation that allows employees to express themselves in whatever terms, experiment with new ideas and behaviors and continuously improve through these experiments. Constructivist team coaching opens an online platform for team dialogue and encounters around team purpose, value the team creates, ways the team operates and connects to different stakeholders, as well as ways it enables team learning. When leaders throughout an organization are trained in basic principles of constructivist coaching, they may become ambassadors of psychological safety, open dialogue and employee development in remote workplaces. With a global shift towards remote work constructivist coaching may become an encounter of the new kind – bringing creativity, voice, participation, sense of agency and construing the Other.

BIOGRAPHY

Jelena is an Associate Professor of Organizational Development at University of Belgrade and Founder at Koučing centar. Her interest goes into the direction of developing employees, teams and organizations from a constructivist perspective. She has authored a book, *Coaching psychology: Constructivist approaches*, published by Routledge (2021). Serves as Associate Editor at the *Journal of Constructivist Psychology*.



SCIENTIFIC PROGRAMME

The Psychology Campus. The building on the right is the Congress venue.

OVERVIEW PROGRAMME

Wednesday 13th	Thursday 14th	Friday 15th	Saturday 16th
9:30-12:30 PRE-CONFERENCE WORKSHOP	9:00-10:30 KEYNOTE LECTURE	9:00-10:30 KEYNOTE LECTURE	9:00-10:30 KEYNOTE LECTURE
<i>Coffee break (not incl.)</i>	<i>Coffee break</i>	<i>Coffee break</i>	<i>Coffee break</i>
PRE-CONFERENCE WORKSHOP	11:00-12:30 Parallel sessions	11:00-13:00 Parallel sessions	11:00-13:00 Parallel sessions
12:30-14:00 <i>Lunch break (not incl.)</i>	12:30-14:00 Poster session		
14:00-14:30 OPENING SESSION	13:00-14:30 <i>Lunch break</i>	13:00-14:30 <i>Lunch break</i>	13:00-14:30 <i>Lunch break</i>
14:30-16:00 KEYNOTE LECTURE	14:30-16:00 Parallel sessions	14:30-16:00 Parallel sessions	14:30-16:00 Parallel sessions
<i>Coffee break</i>	<i>Coffee break</i>	<i>Coffee break</i>	<i>Coffee break</i>
16:30-18:00 Parallel sessions	16:30-18:00 Parallel sessions	16:30-18:00 Parallel sessions	16:30-18:00 FINAL PLENARY
18:00-19:30 WELCOME PARTY	GALA DINNER		

WEDNESDAY 13th

	LECTURE HALL T3 (Ground Floor)	LECTURE HALL L1 (1° Floor)	LECTURE HALL C1 (1° Floor)
9:30		PRE-CONFERENCE WORKSHOP D. Winter, An introduction to personal construct psychology	
10:45	Coffee break (not included)		
11:15		PRE-CONFERENCE WORKSHOP D. Winter, An introduction to grid techniques	
12:30	Lunch break (not included)		
14:00	OPENING SESSION		
14:30	KEYNOTE LECTURE Luis Botella, Encountering the other through mapping the territory of their meanings		
16:00	Coffee break		
16:30	M. C. Ortu, O. Zoppi, S. Zanone Poma, The realm of We-ness in love and care relationships: clinical implications	C. Ward, Reconstructing mental health: Using constructivism's creativity cycle and the arts to live more meaningfully	WORKSHOP F. Del Rizzo, V. Stoppa, And what about forgiving?
17:00	D. Hennessy, Trauma, threat, therapy: Working with aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people	R. Pezzetta, A. Mercurio, S. Cipolletta, Uses of the dependency grid for investigating social support and well-being: A study on international students at an Italian university	
17:30	A. Piattoli, M. Ognibeni, C. Sassi, The encounter with the other and the dimension of freedom: Clinical narratives in a hermeneutic constructivist psychotherapy perspective	M. Filip, I. Poláčková Šolcová, Construing of midlife: Is it about a “midlife crisis”?	
18:00			
18:30	WELCOME PARTY		

THURSDAY 14th

	LECTURE HALL T3 (Ground Floor)	LECTURE HALL L1 (1° Floor)	LECTURE HALL T1
9:00	KEYNOTE LECTURE N. Naffi , <i>Construing the Other in a deepfake and infodemic era: A discussion with youth</i>		
10:30	Coffee break		
11:00	G. Chiari , <i>The opposition between the “I” and the “You”: Intersubjective imbalance and personal disorders</i>	S. Bridi , <i>How can we go somewhere together? A PCP construction of leadership</i>	11:45 WORKSHOP G.Feixas , <i>Explore Your Meanings -EYME: From the repertory grid to virtual reality</i>
11:30		R. Maitland, B. Anderson-Terry , <i>Encountering our futures and future selves: Towards the emergence of a futures orientation in coaching</i>	
11:45	V. Miletic , <i>The unstable subject: The troubling relationality of borderline personality disorder</i>		
12:00		A. Morin, F. Racy , <i>Frequency, content, and functions of self-reported inner speech in young adults: Synthesizing results from five studies</i>	
12:30	POSTER SESSION (Lecture Hall L1)		
13:00	Lunch break		
	LECTURE HALL T4 (Ground Floor)	LECTURE HALL T1 (Ground Floor)	LECTURE HALL L1 (1° Floor)
14:30	S. Duck , <i>What Kelly’s eye tells a Duck’s brain: Sociality, similarity, and convergence of personal meaning systems</i>	L. Ianza, S. C. M. Tomaino, E. Nodari, L. Giudici, N. Di Renzo, M. Zanetti, S. Billekens, M. Piccinino, S. Penzo, L. Lancellotti , <i>From “limited horizons” to “circumspect perspectives”: Our reflections on people’s narratives and personal constructions during and after the first wave of the pandemic as trainee psychotherapists in PCP</i>	WORKSHOP M. Burbach , <i>Building blocks and construction sets: Systematic scaffolding of enactive construal processes in a social communication group intervention for neurodiverse young people</i>
15:00	S. Crawford-Browne , <i>Mistrusting others, affirming self in a context of ongoing danger</i>	E. Mancinelli, D. Pattarozzi, C. Del Piano, S. Ferrentino, A. Muneratti, S. Salcuni , <i>Experiences, conflicts, parenting stress, and burnout among foster parents at the time of Covid-19: A mixed-method study</i>	
15:30	M. Gemignani, V. Burr , <i>Constructing constructions of relational knowledge: Arguments for combining narrative inquiry and discourse analyses</i>	M. Pasi, M. Piccininno, A. Ongaro , <i>Relationship as an essential perturbator in personal growth: Stories from a homeless hostel during the 2020 lockdown</i>	
16:00	Coffee break		
16:30	S. C. M. Tomaino, S. Cipolletta , <i>“Construing our dimension”: Professionals’ narratives and experiences of presence in online psychotherapy</i>	V. Suárez-Aragónés, G. Feixas , <i>The relevance of cognitive conflict as a mechanism in borderline personality disorder: A research proposal</i>	WORKSHOP A. Sanfeliciano, L. A. Saúl, L. Botella, S. Corbella , <i>Using implications grids for the generation of fuzzy cognitive maps: Simulations of personal</i>
17:00	A. Celli , <i>Love and threat: An encounter’s tale</i>	C. Paz, M. Aguilera, V. Compañ, G. Feixas , <i>Case formulation using PCT for the treatment of depression of women with fibromyalgia</i>	

17:30	B. Strobachová , <i>School is not a training for the future! – A report from a community school that lives “here and now”</i>	Y. Demetry, D. Winter, J. Mendoza, M. Y. El Rakhawy , <i>Construing in people diagnosed as schizophrenic in Egypt</i>	<i>construct system change scenarios with the GridFCM programme</i>
18:00	GALA DINNER		

FRIDAY 15th

	LECTURE HALL T3 (Ground Floor)	LECTURE HALL L1 (1° Floor)	
9:00	KEYNOTE LECTURE L. Vanzago , <i>The experience of the embodied subject: Identity, alterity, relationality</i>		
10:30	Coffee break		
11:00	D. Truneckova , <i>Family violence: Transformation of developmental trauma through personal construct psychology</i>	SYMPOSIUM D. Winter, S. Cipolletta, M. Castiglioni , <i>Construing and reconstruction during the COVID-19 pandemic</i>	
11:30	C. Centomo , <i>Embodied metaphors: The metaphorical construction of bodily experience and the implications for psychotherapy</i>		
12:00	M. Jasiński, G. Feixas , <i>Your unresolved dilemmas are hindering your development: A study of student procrastination using the repertory grid technique</i>		
12:30	Lunch break		
	LECTURE HALL T4 (Ground Floor)	LECTURE HALL T1 (Ground Floor)	LECTURE HALL L1 (1° Floor)
14:30	M. Giliberto, M. Frances , <i>‘Hostile dreamers’ – An exploration of PCP constructs of transition</i>	C. Mason, D. Winter, S. Schmeer, B. Berrington , <i>The radicalisation of political activists</i>	WORKSHOP S. Kelly Rawat , <i>Embodying ‘mindful’ sociality: A new relational approach to credulous listening (PCP) in critical conversations in executive coaching and family life</i>
15:15	V. Džinović , <i>How the sense of purpose is strategically defended: Lessons on the use of power in psychotherapy</i>	S. M. Burbach , <i>Do you know where the dragons are? Mapping the ‘wide unknown’ of intersubjective spaces</i>	
16:00	Coffee break		
16:30		M. Alfredetti, A. Petrolati, A. Celli , <i>The experience with the other during the Covid-19 pandemic: A narrative-hermeneutic perspective</i>	D. L. McCarty, D. D. Christian , <i>The usefulness of tattoos for constructing and expressing one’s narrative identity</i>
17:00		M. Filip, D. Kovář, M. Jalůvková , <i>Relationships between invalidation, sociality breakdown and conspiracy thinking during the coronavirus pandemic – The key role of hostility</i>	L. A. Saúl, A. Sanfeliciano , <i>Predictive power of fuzzy cognitive maps on the acquisition of desired personal change</i>
17:15	SYMPOSIUM		

17:30	E. Faccio, L. Aquili, M. Rocelli , <i>Writing with (rather than to or about) “the other” potentialities and risks for the co-writing experience in the clinical context</i>	E. Cappellari, F. Del Rizzo , <i>Body construction in the time of Covid: A PCP research</i>	
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SATURDAY 16th

	LECTURE HALL T3 (Ground Floor)	LECTURE HALL L1 (1° Floor)	LECTURE HALL C1 (1° Floor)	
9:00	KEYNOTE LECTURE J. Pavlovic , <i>Constructivist coaching in remote workplace: Encounters of the new kind</i>	SYMPOSIUM M. Gemignani , <i>Publication avenues for constructivist/constructionist scholars, researchers, and practitioners: A presentation of and dialogue among the main national and international journals on or around PCP</i>		
10:30	<i>Coffee break</i>			
11:00	S. Vicentini, C. Grassi, E. Mascalzoni , <i>The suicidal experience: A subtle balance between love and threat</i>			M.-L. Österlind , <i>Tightroping between managerial and professional standards: University teachers handling the politico-economic context of higher education</i>
11:30	J. Batista, D. Alves, J. Tiago Oliveira, R. A. Neimeyer , <i>Meaning reconstruction in loss: An online protocol</i>			C. Miniati , <i>I hate you because I loved you</i>
12:00	M. L. Martino, D. Lemmo, I. Testoni, E. Iacona, R. A. Neimeyer, M. F. Freda , <i>Anticipatory mourning, growth and meaning-making in longitudinal narratives of young women with breast cancer: An application of meaning of loss codebook</i>			
12:30	<i>Lunch break</i>			
14:30	S. Kelly Rawat, J. Thakore , <i>Encounters of a third kind: Finding meaning in complexity</i>	WORKSHOP S. Živković , <i>Body of a psychotherapist – Needs, strengths and resources in transition</i>		
15:15	V. Džinović, D. Vesić, S. Grbić , <i>From personal towards agonistic constructivism</i> This research was funded by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia (Contract No. 451-03-68/2022-14/200018)			
16:00	<i>Coffee break</i>			
16:30	FINAL PLENARY AND MEETING OF THE GEORGE KELLY SOCIETY			
18:00				

POSTERS

C. Bussè, M. Casa, F. Chiaro, M. Giliberto, M. Gemignani, *The development of group psychotherapy processes in the experience of care with frontotemporal dementia. A PCP approach*

C. L. Caldiroli, R. Procaccia, A. Mazzei, D. Mazzei, A. Caruso, M. Castiglioni, *From attachment theory to self-characterization technique: Study on psychotherapists in training*

S. Filisetti, L. Entilli, S. Cipolletta, *A personal construct psychology interpretation of bereavement experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic in Italy*

A. Maiello, E. Auriemma, M. L. Martino, M. F. Freda, *Narrative construction of chronic illness: A research on the Sense of Grip on Disease (SoGoD)*

S. Martucci, S. Previdi, S. Cipolletta, *The doctor-patient relationship at the time of COVID-19 pandemic: An explorative study in an Italian emergency Department*

S. Mattiello, S. Cipolletta, R. Guzzo, *Growing inclusion*

M. Rapisarda, S. Cipolletta, R. Guzzo, *Equine-assisted therapy (EAT) in disabilities: Effects on general well-being and personal care skills*

A. Sanfeliciano, L. Á. Saúl, *GridFCM: R package for the generation of Fuzzy Cognitive Maps through the Implication Grid*

ABSTRACTS

Wednesday 13th, 16:30-17:00, Lecture Hall T3

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Paper

The realm of We-ness in love and care relationships: Clinical implications

Maria Cristina Ortu, Ombretta Zoppi, Stefano Zanone Poma

Institute of Narrative Constructivism, ICoNa SB, Padua, Italy

Many theories and definitions of Love have been proposed, whether from a personal construct point of view (McCoy's definition of love as a transition where core constructs are validated) or others (see the concept of *modus amoris* of the phenomenologist Binswanger). As Duck et al. stated, every encounter with the Other, even when characterized by love, is a form of perturbation that implies threat at a certain degree. The authors will explore these themes in the therapeutic relationship, a new experience both for the client and the therapist, an encounter full of possible threat as well as validation and love. This experience will be read through the hypothesis of uncompleted paths of intersubjective recognition proposed by Chiari: to the different paths can correspond different ways of living the threat. Furthermore, the identification of some possible indicators of the different forms of recognition will be postulated: e.g., specific threat experiences related to the level of closeness, dependency, setting procedures. Some suggestions on how to deal with this kind of threat in the clinical field will be proposed, also by making use of clinical vignettes.

Wednesday 13th, 16:30-17:00, Lecture Hall L1

Paper

Reconstruing mental health: Using constructivism's creativity cycle and the arts to live more meaningfully

Caroline Ward

Student Counselling Service, University College Dublin, Ireland

September 2021: it was the beginning of the end of social isolation caused by the Covid-19 Pandemic in Ireland. Students were to return to the University campus after two years of home-learning. It seemed somehow a momentous turning point, a watershed in all our lives. How could we and the students reconstrue meaning in a post-Covid world? What changes had been wrought by new ways of remote living, working and studying in the context of contemporary social and political upheaval? Students were now to meet each other face-to-face - some hugely excited by the prospect, others deeply anxious, many feeling lonely and socially disconnected. In the counselling team, we knew it could not simply be business as usual. We needed to create novel constructs and a space where students could meet each other and find meaning, to process and understand their fears and to find a space where 'love and threat' could indeed 'confront each other' in novel ways. We consulted the Students' Union and developed a series of events using the creative arts - music, poetry, drama and art - as stimulus for debate and discussion and, inspired by Constructivism's Creativity Cycle, we explored the art of living.

Wednesday 13th, 17:00-17:30, Lecture Hall T3

Paper

Trauma, threat, therapy: Working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

Desley Hennessy

Tharawal Aboriginal Corporation, NSW, Australia

It is impossible to talk about the trauma of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of Australia without mentioning the history of that trauma, which began with the arrival of the First Fleet in 1788. Initially, much of this trauma would have been preceded by threat - awareness of an imminent change in one's core systems - from the taking of land, the capturing of people and the loss of language, to the over 300 massacres that occurred. This history of violence and oppression has created an atmosphere of trauma, leading to cycles of violence, alcohol and drug abuse, institutionalisation, and imprisonment. This paper uses a case study to explore "the encounter with the other" in the context of the sexual abuse of one survivor. The author proposes that, given the gradual nature of the grooming process, the perpetrator does not present a threat in a Kellyan sense. However, what becomes threatening for the individual is therapy, when the client is put in the position of having to confront the trauma. This includes, but is not limited to, disclosing the abuse, telling other family members, and managing the "fall-out" from the disclosure.

Wednesday 13th, 17:00-17:30, Lecture Hall L1

Uses of the dependency grid for investigating social support and well-being: A study on international students at an Italian university

Rachele Pezzetta¹, Arianna Mercurio², Sabrina Cipolletta²

¹ IRCCS San Camillo Hospital, Venice, Italy

² Department of General Psychology, University of Padua, Italy

The present study aimed to explore whether the Dispersion of Dependency, as measured by Kelly's Dependency Grid, can provide information on the perception of social support and its relationship with well-being, in a population of international students. This population is exposed to many stressors when moving to a foreign country, which increases the chance of experiencing psychological distress. A total of 139 international students at an Italian University completed the Dependency Grids, the WHO-5 Well-being Index, the Symptom Checklist 90-R and the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support. Results showed that higher dispersion of dependency on various resources was associated with higher perceived support and lower distress. Tellingly, international students who sought professional psychological help reported lower well-being, higher distress, and availability of fewer resources compared to those who did not seek psychological support. Furthermore, coming from collectivist cultures (rather than individualist ones) as well as being a long-term (rather than short-term) student were associated with higher distress and less perceived support. The study suggests that the Dependency Grid can be a useful tool to understand and characterize students' social support and network breadth; moreover, counselling services for international students should help them find new sources of social support.

Wednesday 13th, 17:30-18:00, Lecture Hall T3

Paper

The encounter with the other and the dimension of freedom: Clinical narratives in a hermeneutic constructivist psychotherapy perspective

Alessandro Piattoli, Mara Ognibeni, Cristina Sassi

SE, Centre of Narrative-Hermeneutic Constructivist Psychology and Psychotherapy, Florence, Italy

On the basis of their psychotherapeutic experience as practitioners, the authors will outline some links between their client's narratives about the sense of freedom and the disorder meant as a nonvalidation choice. They will describe through brief clinical examples such connections in terms of a professional hypothesis based on a Narrative-Hermeneutic Psychotherapy framework. The clients' conversations regarding the topic of freedom are portrayed as a lack or vain pursuit to feel free in the context of interpersonal relationships. This allows the authors to hypothesize that the construct "freedom vs constraint" is one of the "markers of forms" specific of the disorder.

Wednesday 13th, 17:30-18:00, Lecture Hall L1

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Paper

Construing of midlife: Is it about a "midlife crisis"?

Miroslav Filip, Iva Poláčková Šolcová

Institute of Psychology of the Czech Academy of Sciences, Czech Republic

Midlife has been traditionally viewed as a period where an individual has reached the "peak" of his/her life-span and recognizes his/her further life as inevitably declining and limited, which may raise the "midlife crisis" and the need for a reconstruction of meaning of life. Through a dialogical-narrative analysis of in-depth interviews about midlife experiences with 50 participants, we identified several patterns of construing of midlife. Although most of the participants mentioned the recognition of life as limited, the patterns of construing of midlife were more diverse and could not be reduced to the traditional view. Noticeably, the patterns were associated to social context (e.g., living in a family or living alone without stable relationships) and main social roles in previous life periods (e.g., raising child, career development). Comparing scores of participants on the Satisfaction with Life Scale, we discuss adaptivity of the patterns of construing of midlife. We argue that the dialogical-constructivist approach enables a fine-grained understanding of the period of midlife.

Wednesday 13th, 16:30-18:00, Lecture Hall C1

Workshop

And what about forgiving?

Francesca Del Rizzo, Vito Stoppa

Institute of Constructivist Psychology, Padua, Italy

Personal relationships are the nourishment of our life, what gives it meaning and a sense of fulfilment, but they are also, sometimes, the theatre of our most deep sorrows and pains. We happen to feel hurt by partners, parents, sons, and daughters, relatives, friends, colleagues, etc. The pain we feel is often accompanied by anger and the feeling of being somehow betrayed. The relationship is damaged, and we are injured. What can be done to restore ourselves and the relationship? Forgiving is a way, but not always it is viable. In this workshop, we will reflect on our personal

experiences of injuries and forgiveness. We will use Personal Construct Psychology tools and a model of forgiveness developed by one of us (Del Rizzo).

Thursday 14th, 11:00-11:45, Lecture Hall T3

Extended paper

The opposition between the “I” and the “You”: Intersubjective imbalance and personal disorders

Gabriele Chiari

Director Emeritus of ICoNa SB (Institute of Narrative Constructivism, Padua, Italy), and of SE (Centre of Narrative-Hermeneutic Constructivist Psychology and Psychotherapy, Florence, Italy)

The concept of psychological disorder should be a fundamental question for any psychotherapeutic approach based on an adequate psychological theory. When the question “What can be understood by disorder” is asked, the answers are different depending on the theory adopted. For example, they can refer to learned maladaptive habits, irrational beliefs, dysfunctional relationships within the family, repetition compulsion, and so on. In illustrating the assumptions of personal construct psychotherapy, Kelly proposed a clear definition of disorder as “any personal construction which is used repeatedly in spite of consistent invalidation.” However, such definition does not look like it has been used throughout the volume dedicated to psychotherapy nor in Kelly’s subsequent writings. The aim of my paper is to show how the personal construct view of disorder has been further developed by some of his followers and to suggest the possibility and usefulness of elaborating further their proposals by making reference to the phenomenological notion of intersubjective imbalance. In my opinion such a notion, which is mainly used in some relational psychoanalytic approaches, can be convincingly translated into the language of personal construct theory as I did in the hypothesis of uncompleted paths of mutual recognition.

Thursday 14th, 11:00-11:30, Lecture Hall L1

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Paper

How can we go somewhere together? A PCP construction of leadership

Susan Bridi

Institute of Constructivist Psychology, Padua, Italy

According to Personal Construct Psychology, every human being is characterised by a personal construct system. Kelly’s work provides an articulate theory about how this system functions and how to promote a system’s wellbeing. The present paper suggests the idea that teams and organisations might also be seen as construct systems, therefore extending PCP’s range of convenience to a different professional field. Kelly’s fundamental postulate and corollaries are reinterpreted in order to provide a better understanding of team and organisational processes. The paper focuses in particular on how PCP might represent an insightful framework for supporting leadership and organisational development. A hypothesis for a PCP construction of leadership is presented. Theoretical elaborations and case studies are provided in order to explore possible applications of Kelly’s work in the field of organisational psychology.

Thursday 14th, 11:45-12:30, Lecture Hall T3

Extended paper

The unstable subject: The troubling relationality of borderline personality disorder

Vladimir Miletic

Serbian Constructivist Association, Four Steps Coaching Inc., Republic of Serbia

Kelly's intense focus on personal construing processes is understandable given the goals and the socio-cultural context in which his theory arose, but it left plenty of space to elucidate the relationship between public processes of construing and their interaction with personal constructs to the extent these can be separated: the ways in which they interact and create each other. Previously, this exploration was theoretical, and it has extended to drawing parallels between Kelly and theorists such as Foucault or Bauman. In this paper, my goal is to explore this topic from a clinical point of view, emphasizing its practical importance as a means of understanding our clients and placing their change in a wider, social context. I will examine the relational aspect of personal construct psychology through a therapeutic process with a client diagnosed with borderline personality disorder (BPD). I will attempt to show how BPD can be construed as an inherent instability of the system of constructs that arises as a specific overlap of public and private constructs, resulting from highly specific interactions with significant others.

Thursday 14th, 11:30-12:00, Lecture Hall L1

Paper

Encountering our futures and future selves: Towards the emergence of a futures orientation in coaching

Roger Maitland¹, Brett Anderson-Terry²

¹ University of Stellenbosch Business School, Western Cape, South Africa / LifeLab

² LifeLab

The anticipation of and encounter with our futures and future selves is a complex 'other' to construe as our future selves are embedded in multiple possible, plausible, probable, and preferred futures, which are replete with uncertainties. As society navigates a cascade of wicked problems associated with systemic issues such as the sustainability transition, coaches are challenged to support their clients to use the future to inform the present. The turn towards anticipation theory in futures science represents an opportunity for the development and application of personal construct coaching with its intrinsic anticipatory orientation. This paper problematises the role of coach and conceptualises the role of futures coach as a way of encountering multiple futures and future selves. This will be examined using Poli's anticipation theory, and constructivist and personal construct approaches to coaching. Interpretative clustering is used to explore the ways in which the future is construed in coaching. These data are used to develop a framework to support a futures coaching orientation in practice with particular attention to how multiple futures and future selves are encountered in the coaching process. With our collective future hanging in the balance, it has never been more important to encounter future multiplicity.

Paper

Frequency, content, and functions of self-reported inner speech in young adults:
Synthesizing results from five studies

Alain Morin¹, Famira Racy²

¹ Mount Royal University, Calgary, Alberta, Canada

² Independent Scholar

In this presentation we summarize results obtained in several studies using an openformat self-report procedure aimed at collecting naturally occurring inner speech in young adults. Inner speech consists in talking to oneself in silence; we view inner speech as an important cognitive activity influencing our personal constructs and shaping the ways we gather information, evaluate it, and develop interpretations. Inner speech thus constructs our perception of our own experiences as well as the world around us. We look at existing inner speech measures as well as their respective strengths and limitations, emphasizing the appropriateness of an open-format self-report method for our purpose. We describe our coding scheme used to organize inner speech instances produced by our participants. We present results in terms of the most frequently self-reported inner speech topics, which sheds light on the typical perceived content and functions of inner speech. Some of these are: negative emotions, problem solving/thinking, planning/time management, self-motivating/enhancing speech, emotional control, when alone/ bored, and self-reflection. These results are consistent with the self-regulatory and self-reflective functions of inner speech discussed in the literature.

Paper

What Kelly's eye tells a Duck's brain: Sociality, similarity, and convergence of
personal meaning systems

Steve Duck

Department of Rhetoric, University of Iowa, USA

Kelly's visions into social processes have been less thoroughly explored than his clinical and other intuitions. However, his insights about the ways in which individuals represent others' construct systems, about the ways in which we "share" social experiences, and about the mechanisms for connecting with others at the social and psychological level, remain innovative, insightful, and regrettably underexplored. A few attempts to unpick the implications of his penetrating views have made little impact on the way that psychologists and other relationships scholars have developed their theories, despite the fact that Kelly's views are largely consistent with the development of social constructionist, social constructivist, and other similar approaches to the understanding of the nature of relationships. Although "relationship scientists" have repeatedly and dramatically failed to define the nature of relationships, closer inspection of Kelly's work creates many opportunities for improving the situation. It may now be time for PCP to connect more fully with the specific emphases of researchers seeking to clarify the operation of relationships and to understand the ways in which "similarity" of personality can be better understood using Kelly's guidance.

Paper

Mistrusting others, affirming self in a context of ongoing danger

Sara Crawford-Browne

University of Cape Town, South Africa

Cape Town's marginalized neighbourhoods experience extraordinarily high levels of ongoing criminal, gang-related, and domestic violence that affect women's wellbeing and relationships. Grounded in constructivist theory, this study explored women's construal of their neighbourhood and their consequent adaptations. Constructivist grounded theory methodology guided semi-structured interviews with twenty-one participants, and transcript analysis. 'Mistrusting others within the immoral chaos' emerged as the participants' shared construal of their social environment, alongside 'anticipating danger' and 'surviving daily stressors'. Within this, they blamed their community, recognised complicity, expected hurt, feared gossip, and felt betrayed by failing authorities. In encountering the other in their daily environment, they found real and existential threat. Some participants responded by consciously affirming their sense of self within the chaos, or by adopting strong identities of decency and agency to separate from and control the disorder. Others struggled to affirm themselves in a space where neighbours could not be trusted. Living in a dangerous neighborhood shaped encounters with the other, affecting social relationships and the sense of self as expressions of continuous traumatic stress.

Thursday 14th, 15:00-15:30, Lecture Hall T1

Paper

Experiences, conflicts, parenting stress, and burnout among foster parents at the time of Covid-19: A mixed-method study

Elisa Mancinelli^{1,2}, Davide Pattarozzi^{1,3}, Chiara Del Piano^{1,3}, Stefano Ferrentino¹, Anna Muneratti³, Silvia Salcuni¹

¹ Department of Developmental Psychology and Socialization, University of Padua, Italy

² Digital Health Lab, Centre for Digital Health and Wellbeing, Fondazione Bruno Kessler, Trento, Italy

³ Centre for Foster Care and Family Solidarity [Centro Affidi e Solidarietà Familiare-Servizi Sociali del Comune di Padova], Padua, Italy

The Covid-pandemic has massively changed the lives of many including foster-parents. This mixed-method study aimed to investigate its impact on foster-parents' parenting stress, burnout, and the perceived emotional and behavioural problems of their foster children. Foster-parents' experience of foster care and of their bonding with the child were qualitatively explored following the grounded-theory method to identify domains and sub-domains. During 2021 N=33 foster-parents (M age=51.18, SD=8.70, Range=28-69, 60.6% woman) completed self-reports and a semi-structured interview. Foster-parents' parenting stress and burnout were in the normative range. ANOVA showed no difference in foster-mothers' vs. -fathers' parenting stress, although mothers perceived greater contrast between their idealized vs. perceived self-as-parent ($F=4.57$, $df=1$, $p<.00$). Parenting stress and burnout were positively correlated with the perceived externalizing symptoms of the foster child ($r=.51$, $r=.45$, respectively, $p=.01$), while negatively with the foster-child's prosociality ($r=-.36$, $p=.05$; $r=-.46$, $p=.01$; respectively); no association emerged with the foster-child's internalizing symptoms. Interviews indicated that foster-parents perceived greater closeness with the foster child (97%) and a growth in their parental identity (50%) during the pandemic. However, increased fear and concerns regarding parental responsibility (87.5%) were reported. Foster-parents seem resilient toward the pandemic's challenges, perceiving that it gives an opportunity for self-improvement as parents. However, the fatigue and concerns reported should be addressed.

Thursday 14th, 14:30-15:30, Lecture Hall L1

Workshop

Building blocks and construction sets: Systematic scaffolding of enactive construal processes in a social communication group intervention for neurodiverse young people

Sandy M. Burbach

Independent Speech and Language Therapy Practice, Somerset, UK

A longing for friendship in the face of increasing peer rejection is a common lived experience of neurodiverse young people. Neurodiverse development is known to alter both the structure and function of information processing and associated cognitive systems. Despite having a significant impact on social cognition, however, these differences are seldom addressed directly in current social communication interventions. Participants in this workshop will explore the functional relationships between seven core developmental domains, considered foundational in both intersubjective development and personal and relational construal of meaning during social interaction. The domains network is presented as constitutive, contextualising and enabling elements of the SCAEP Model of Core Constructive Domains (2012). This model has been used clinically as part of the enactive Social Communication as Experiential Play (SCAEP) approach for more than a decade. The model systematises support for all seven domains during interaction and play by scaffolding repeated explorations and development of intersubjective and social cognitive processes at all five levels of Ciolletta, Mascolo and Procter's (2020) Relational Model of Intersubjective Development. Participants are invited to contribute favourite childhood and social skills group games to the workshop, with a view to enabling co-construal of meaning for clients within their own clinical practice.

Thursday 14th, 15:30-16:00, Lecture Hall T1

Paper

Constructing constructions of relational knowledge: Arguments for combining narrative inquiry and discourse analyses

Marco Gemignani¹, Vivien Burr²

¹ Universidad Loyola Andalucía, Spain

² University of Huddersfield, UK

Narrative Inquiry (NI) and Foucauldian Discourse Analysis (FDA) have different origins and focus. While the former focuses on subjectivity and experience, FDA centers on how prevailing discourses serve to construct individuals through processes that are intimately linked to power and constructions of historical and sociocultural conditions. However, NI and FDA share a constructivist, anti-essentialist orientation to the person. We argue that the separation of FDA and NI results from a longstanding and unhelpful dichotomy between the individual and society that pits agency against structure and in which the discipline of psychology has largely ignored the immense constructive force of social, political, and cultural factors in the production of the individual. By linking the tree to the forest, and vice versa, the combined adoption of NI and FDA allows us to see the ways in which lives are lived through narratives that inevitably interact with and contribute to dominant discourses, and which in turn make some narratives more likely to be embraced and performed. Transcending NI and FDA as discrete forms of analysis, our work develops epistemologically in dialogue with constructivism and feminist neomaterialism.

Thursday 14th, 15:30-16:00, Lecture Hall T1

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Paper

From “limited horizons” to “circumspect perspectives”: Our reflections on people’s narratives and personal constructions during and after the first wave of the pandemic as trainee psychotherapists in PCP

Luca Ianza, Silvia Caterina Maria Tomaino, Elisa Nodari, Lisa Giudici, Noemi Di Renzo, Marta Zanetti, Sarah Billekens, Marta Piccinino, Sofia Penzo, Laura Lancellotti
CESIPc, Centro studi in psicoterapia cognitiva, Padua, Italy

The COVID-19 pandemic as an unprecedented and threatening situation has imposed on people to find meaning to their experience in different ways. Our research aimed to explore the ways people constructed the lockdown experience during the first wave of the pandemic, to point out needs and difficulties reported while transitioning to the end of the first wave characterized by strict policies. An online questionnaire with open-ended and close-ended questions created ad hoc was disseminated between July and September 2020 in Italy; a total of 376 answers were registered. The results pointed out personal constructions regarding the three main questions: “What has been your preeminent feeling during the lockdown?”, “What would it be its opposite?” and “Up to now, while gradually returning to the everyday life, what is your preeminent feeling?”. The lockdown challenged the typical constructs we used to experience our lives with, highlighting psychological suffering and needs to be faced while gradually moving to a new everyday life. Starting from our personal reflections as psychotherapy trainees and the analysis of the results, we interpreted data through Kelly’s transitions to understand meanings and narrations related to the pandemic to reflect on social implications and potential interventions.

Thursday 14th, 16:30-17:00, Lecture Hall T4

Paper

“Construing our dimension”: Professionals’ narratives and experiences of presence in online psychotherapy

Silvia Caterina Maria Tomaino, Sabrina Cipolletta
Department of General Psychology, University of Padua, Italy

The COVID-19 pandemic posed multiple challenges to clinical practice for psychologists. The present study aimed to explore the direct experiences with online interventions during the pandemic lived and reported by Italian professionals, trying to identify and understand different perspectives and narratives regarding creating and maintaining therapeutic relationships in the online setting. The “forced” and extensive experience of digital tools posed many challenges in construing new ways to be present and in relationship with the client, threatening the ordinary ways of practising and demanding to define new setting boundaries and ways of interaction. Results indicate that the switch to online interventions for many professionals resulted in a transition of anxiety that required much effort to construe ways to be handled. With time and experience, many psychologists aggressively faced those challenges working together with their clients in the joint construction and embodiment of a third space “*beyond space and time*” where the therapeutic process could exist. Thanks to the contribution of participants that shared their experiences, personal “techniques” and strategies to overcome digital barriers, it is possible to foresee the construction of evolving ways to practice and be present in the online setting, drawing possibilities that seemed not viable before.

Thursday 14th, 16:30-17:00, Lecture Hall T1

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Paper

The relevance of cognitive conflict as a mechanism in borderline personality disorder: A research proposal

Victor Suárez-Aragonés, Guillem Feixas

Universitat de Barcelona, Spain

Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD) is a severe condition that has brought attention for a long time to mental health professionals due to the significant amount of psychological distress that it can produce and the related high risk of suicidal behaviour. Although there are several psychotherapeutic approaches that are currently available for BPD, none of them seem to address all existing issues. Most of them are focused on targets that are relevant for people with BPD, but often cognitive conflicts receive insufficient attention. Some of the problems that people with a BPD diagnosis face, such as identity disturbance and impulsivity, could be related to inner conflicts which need to be tackled during the psychotherapeutic process. With the goal to gauge the relevance and the role of cognitive conflicts in patients with BPD, we present a research proposal based on the assessment of implicative dilemmas and dilemmatic constructs as varieties of cognitive conflicts using the repertory grid technique.

Thursday 14th, 17:00-17:30, Lecture Hall T4

Paper

Love and threat: An encounter's tale

Anna Celli

CESIPc, Centro studi in psicoterapia cognitiva, Florence, Italy

The story of my encounter with Susanna allowed me to wonder about the ways in which we can get involved, both as therapists and as persons. Within this particular context this might happen as the relationship with the client disturbs us, and sometimes it even disorients us. My purpose is to describe Susanna's dilemma (hence the disorder) following the narrative hermeneutic perspective, which is the Italian elaboration of PCT. Sometimes the very experience that we can choose to have with the client can open up new perspectives, for both of us.

Thursday 14th, 17:00-17:30, Lecture Hall T1

Paper

Case formulation using PCT for the treatment of depression of women with fibromyalgia

Clara Paz¹, Mari Aguilera², Victoria Compañ², Guillem Feixas²

¹ Universidad de Las Américas, Ecuador

² Universitat de Barcelona, Spain

Fibromyalgia is a chronic pain syndrome, most prevalent in women and with high comorbidity with depressive symptomatology. The complexity of this disorder requires the consideration of the unique psychological characteristics of each patient to attain good outcomes and personal construct therapy (PCT) could accomplish this goal. In this study, we present a treatment proposal specially designed for PCT for comorbid pain and depression based on previous literature regarding case formulation according to PCT and our prior experience in a pilot study. Four possible courses of action with specific objectives and techniques had been defined from common motives for consultation. To illustrate this treatment proposal, we present a case of a 49-year-old woman who has been suffering fibromyalgia and depressive symptoms for 20 years. This case is within a randomized controlled trial to test the efficacy of PCT as compared to a well-established treatment in the reduction of depressive symptoms in women with fibromyalgia.

Paper

School is not a training for the future! – A report from a community school that lives “here and now”

Barbara Strobachová

Masarik University, Department of Social Education, Brno, Czech Republic

Many parents still believe that children attend school just to be prepared for the future, and children adopt this view as well. Commenting on typical schooling in the Czech Republic, the expectation that after years of boredom, sitting and more or less passive reception of information a miracle occurs and a child will become an autonomous personality open to life challenges is quite nonsensical. Following the traditions of Dewey and constructivist education, I argue that schooling of the 21st century should get rid of this stereotype and consider schooling as a natural part of everyday living of children, teachers and families. In other words, schooling has not value due to expected outcomes in the future, it has its value “here and now”. I report some experiences from a lower secondary “community” school. I present examples of how we implement the idea of “living school” at various levels: individual didactics (a mix of guided, unguided and experiential learning), relational (safe and democratic atmosphere), and community (development of the school as a living society). In contrast to the majority of their teenage peers, children in our school still keep their interest in learning and exploring the world and identify themselves with their school.

Paper

Construing in people diagnosed as schizophrenic in Egypt

Youstina Demetry¹, David Winter², Jaime Mendoza³, Mona Yehia El Rakhawy⁴

¹ Centre for Psychiatry Research, Department of Clinical Neuroscience, Karolinska Institute & Stockholm

Health Care Services, Sweden

² Department of Psychology, Sport and Geography, University of Hertfordshire, Hatfield, UK

³ St. Matthew University School of Medicine, Orlando, Florida, USA

⁴ Department of Psychiatry, Faculty of Medicine, Cairo University, Cairo, Egypt

Beginning with Bannister’s classic studies of thought disorder, personal construct research on people diagnosed as psychotic, primarily using repertory grid technique, initially focused on the structure of the construct system and subsequently has been rather more concerned with identity. The aim of the study which will be presented was to investigate such aspects of construing in a population that has not been the subject of previous personal construct research, people diagnosed as schizophrenic in Egypt. Repertory grid technique was used to explore whether the construct systems of individuals diagnosed with schizophrenia differed from those of individuals with other psychiatric diagnoses as well as a control group of healthcare personnel. There was evidence of lower self-meaningfulness and greater inconsistency in construing in individuals diagnosed with schizophrenia than in the other groups but no differences in various other aspects of construing, including self – ideal self distance and implicative dilemmas.

Thursday 14th, 16:30-18:00, Lecture Hall L1

Workshop

Using implications grids for the generation of fuzzy cognitive maps: Simulations of personal construct system change scenarios with the GridFCM programme

Alejandro Sanfeliciano¹, Luis Angel Saúl¹, Luis Botella², Sergi Corbella²

¹ Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia (UNED). Madrid, Spain

² FPCEE Blanquerna- Universidad Ramón Llull. Barcelona, Spain

This workshop will present the use of the GridFCM software (free software, R package), which uses the Grid Technique and the implications grid to generate Fuzzy Cognitive Maps. These help us to graphically represent the dynamics of the Personal Construct System (PCS) and facilitate the generation of hypothetical scenario simulations. The representation of the dynamics of the PCS and the derived mathematical indices provide us with information about the inconsistencies of the system that make it difficult for the patient to achieve the desired changes. At the same time, they serve as a space for experimentation with the patient to explore scenarios of evolution and change. The workshop will teach the installation of the GridFCM programme, its functionalities, outputs and the interpretation of the derived indices. The workshop will be illustrated with a clinical case. The following articles are recommended reading:

Botella, L. (2021). Mapping Psychological Spaces: Psychotherapeutic Applications of System Dynamics in Fuzzy Cognitive Maps of Personal Constructs. *Revista De Psicoterapia*, 32(118), 237-252. <https://doi.org/10.33898/rdp.v32i118.474>

Saúl, L. A., Sanfeliciano, A., Botella, L., Perea, R., & Gonzalez-Puerto, J. A. (2022). Fuzzy Cognitive Maps as a Tool for Identifying Cognitive Conflicts That Hinder the Adoption of Healthy Habits. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 19(3). <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph19031411>

Friday 15th, 11:00-11:30, Lecture Hall T3

Paper

Family violence: Transformation of developmental trauma through personal construct psychology

Deborah Trunekova

Family violence rather than the term domestic violence, better acknowledges the multiple victims within the family, and becomes more inclusive of the children's experience of violence within their home. The experience is one of harm that is traumatic and cumulative, leaving children with trauma-related negative core beliefs that have long-lasting effects on their brains and bodies. These core constructs determined by the impact of the violator, while adaptive at the time in organizing the children's development around survival, are developmentally unhelpful understandings of their experience. Developmental trauma changes core constructions, about people, the world, about safety, relationships, and the future. It is proposed in this presentation, personal construct psychology has a role in psychotherapy for child survivors of family violence. This approach is one of credulously exploring the children's reactive responses to traumatic distress, with the focus of the psychotherapy on understanding the core constructions of self-versus-other, of self-other permanency, and of self-other constancy which are central to a constructivist conceptualization of trauma (Leitner, 2000). Meanings are changed by elaborating the traumatic experiences, and reconstructing core constructs through sociality. It is about creating greater coherence for the client between the "felt identity" and the "narrated identity" (Cionini, 2013).

Friday 15th, 11:30-12:00, Lecture Hall T3

Paper

Embodied metaphors: The metaphorical construction of bodily experience and the implications for psychotherapy

Chiara Centomo

Institute of Narrative Constructivism, ICoNa SB, Padua, Italy

In psychotherapy people normally use many metaphors to speak about their discomfort. Far from being mere rhetorical figures, the choice of a metaphor to describe one's pain represents a specific way to give meaning to their own experience. Mair (1967) talks about "metaphors for living", because every metaphor carries a universe of meanings that channel perspectives, experiences and choices, through which it becomes for the person a lived reality, embodied knowledge. The use of metaphors acquires peculiar features when the disorder is connected to the body. Indeed, in this case metaphors can "build a bridge" between a mind and a body that in the client's experience seem alienated from each other and trapped in an inevitably dualistic language. Besides, these metaphors often tell a story studded with painful alienation from oneself and from one's own body, which highlight the relational matrix of the disorder and at the same time are able to offer a possible solution. Metaphors suggest to the trained psychotherapist the most viable directions of movement. Taking the cue from a history of obesity and other body related clinical experiences, this paper explores the propositional space of the "as if" offered by metaphors: a real "language of hypotheses", as suggested by Kelly (1969), able to open up new interpretative and relational opportunities.

Friday 15th, 12:00-12:30, Lecture Hall T3

Paper

Your unresolved dilemmas are hindering your development: A study of student procrastination using the repertory grid technique

Michal Jasiński, Guillem Feixas

Universitat de Barcelona, Spain

Academic performance and flourishing are often blocked while the person struggles to understand what hinders their personal development. Core constructs generate personal goals that people can pursue in their life but implicative dilemmas (ID) might interfere in the achievement of their full potential. Procrastination, a common phenomenon among university students, involves a pattern of postponing an intended course of action in spite of being aware of the negative consequences of this delay. In a cross-sectional study, 67 students who procrastinated were compared with 61 who did not present this problem. The Repertory Grid Technique was used to identify IDs as well as to analyze other variables along with behavioral and decisional procrastination scales. Results indicated that a large proportion of students who procrastinated had at least one ID in their grids. The average number and intensity of IDs was higher as well in this group as compared to controls. These findings are relevant for targeting internal conflict (e.g., using dilemma-focused therapy) when counselling students with procrastination or in programs promoting personal development and flourishing.

Friday 15th, 11:00-12:30, Lecture Hall L1

Symposium

Construing and reconstruction during the COVID-19 pandemic

David Winter¹, Sabrina Cipolletta², Marco Castiglioni³

¹ Department of Psychology, University of Hertfordshire, Hatfield, UK

² Department of General Psychology, University of Padua, Italy

³ University of Milano-Bicocca, Italy

The COVID-19 pandemic and measures used to limit this have faced many people with major transitions in construing. The papers in this symposium will explore these transitions and the strategies adopted to deal with them and find meaning in circumstances that have been viewed as unprecedented. David Winter will present findings of a study that investigated the worst experiences of the pandemic in 741 USA residents, and another on 108 UK residents that also considered what they had learnt from the pandemic and their anticipations. Accounts were analysed in terms of personal construct theory's diagnostic constructs. Sabrina Cipolletta, using the narratives of the USA residents in the previous study and those of 357 residents of Italy, will present results of a mixed methods analysis to understand traumatic experiences during the pandemic. A qualitative analysis of 30 Italian older people's experiences of social isolation during the pandemic will be used to understand the transition from trauma to loneliness. Marco Castiglioni will present findings from 680 Italian participants on the mediating role of meaning-making processes in the relationship between Covid triggers and psychological symptoms. This study tried to replicate Millman et al.'s (2020) findings and deepen their model with some original aspects.

Friday 15th, 14:30-15:15, Lecture Hall T4

Extended paper

'Hostile dreamers' – An exploration of PCP constructs of transition

Massimo Giliberto, Mary Frances

Institute of Constructivist Psychology, Padua, Italy

Following his idea of 'constructive alternativism' - the philosophical and epistemological basis of PCP - George Kelly offers us a relatively abstract and empty theory, as far as possible devoid of specific content. PCP practitioners adopt the core assumption that alternatives, both known and unknown, are always available, while simultaneously honouring the relevance and validity of the meanings and behaviours of others. We are constantly reminded to challenge ourselves to make sense of individual positions and understandings. The theory, in other words, is presented like a travelling instrument open and ready for different, alternative visions of the world. Kelly's 'constructs of transition' are his re-workings of anxiety, threat, hostility, guilt, and aggression. He redefines these experiences in particular ways which are very different from familiar descriptions and assumptions, and which often diverge sharply from standard definitions. Even so, within PCP practice there can still be a tendency to pathologise, perhaps because those who use and describe the theory are predominantly clinicians, but also because most professional practice leans towards what we believe we know, focusing on 'solutions', and encouraging people to move on from positions which are popularly understood as negative or problematic. In the context of the 'choice corollary', we would propose that the constructs of transition might be explored in a more positive and creative light with an emphasis on the infinite variety of individual meanings. Our hostile refusals, for example, may well contain our most hopeful dreams. We look forward to exploring these ideas with conference friends and colleagues.

Friday 15th, 15:15-16:00, Lecture Hall T4

Extended paper

How the sense of purpose is strategically defended: Lessons on the use of power in psychotherapy

Vladimir Džinović

Institute for Educational Research, Belgrade, Republic of Serbia

I start from the model of the agonistic self whose dynamics is characterized by distinctive constellations as broader patterns of power relations between voices. The Defense of Purpose constellation is primarily associated with depression and is defined by the predominance of the antagonist of the voice that personifies the sense of purpose. Clinical examples of the restoration of purpose by constructing a facilitator voice and by establishing a coalition of the old and new ideologues of purpose will be presented. Marcia's *Real Marcia* voice personifying personal growth was undermined and its antagonist the *Lifeless* prevailed imposing the narrative of worthlessness and helplessness. Personifying a sense of control over her own life, the *Marcia Who Trusts Life* voice resisted the *Lifeless*. At the same time, this new voice 'gave support' for the ideology of personal flourishing to prevail again as the *Real Marcia*'s facilitator. Valery's antagonist *Depressive* with its narrative of rejection prevailed over the *Strong* voice, which personifies fighting against negative emotions. The *Acceptance* with its narrative of welcoming negative emotions appeared and resisted the antagonist. This newly constructed voice also clashed with the *Strong*, but with the relation between the two voices showing a tendency towards growing into a coalition and thus modifying the narrative of purpose.

Friday 15th, 14:30-15:15, Lecture Hall T1

Extended paper

The radicalisation of political activists

Clare Mason, David Winter, Stefanie Schmeer, Bibi Berrington

University of Hertfordshire, UK

Radicalisation into terrorism is, tragically, evident throughout the world. Whilst political activists are far from terrorists, the process in which they become active, and possibly violent, on behalf of a group may follow a similar pathway. Following on from a previous study of pro- and anti-Brexit activists, three political activist groups were studied: Trump supporters; Black Lives Matter supporters; and climate change believers/deniers. Grounded in the constructivist model of radicalisation, the studies combined personal construct psychology and identity fusion theory. Participants' construing was examined through repertory grid technique and their degree of 'fusion' to the group was measured. Hypothetical extreme pro-group behaviour was also investigated. Results indicated that the majority of political activists were 'fused' to their group and if so, were more likely to undertake hypothetical extreme behaviour. Individuals construed themselves more positively and clearly on becoming an activist. Opposition activists were construed more negatively and extremely than fellow activists, and this was associated with an increased willingness to undertake extreme pro-group behaviour. This is consistent with the constructivist model and was heightened in those who were 'fused'. This has broader implications which may be particularly pertinent, given the violent impact of extremist activity across the globe.

Friday 15th, 15:15-16:00, Lecture Hall T1

[Back to programme](#)

Extended paper

Do you know where the dragons are? Mapping the ‘wide unknown’ of intersubjective spaces

Sandy M. Burbach

Independent Speech and Language Therapy Practice, Somerset, UK

Perceptual, cognitive and relational ‘experiences of being’ may be fundamentally different for neurodiverse young people. Changes in neural connectivity and functioning may result in significant differences in the constructive processes underlying intersubjective development, with direct consequences for achieving commonality with a partner’s construing. Neurodiverse young people seldom experience relationships which do not demand conformity to a partner’s normative values. Their relational world is characterised by a permanent sense of threat to their core constructs, repeated erosions of autonomy and social agency and inconsistent experiences of co-regulation and coordination in participatory sense-making. Normative therapeutic and educational constructs refer to ‘social communication disorders’, ‘cognitive inflexibility’ and ‘social anxiety’. Peers call them ‘weird’, ‘a nerd’ or ‘retard’. Parents struggle with guilt, exasperation and despair. Toby (11yrs) requested a satnav and a sword to slay lurking dangers. This paper describes the resultant Social Spaces Model - part of a novel enactive approach to intersubjective development devised with the help of neurodiverse teens and in clinical use since 2012. Social Spaces creates a mapped framework of actual, perceptual and co-constructed interactional spaces in which to develop tolerances of holding yourself in readiness to interact, ‘changing your mind’ and adapting to ‘different’ during autonomously evolving play.

Friday 15th, 15:30-16:00, Lecture Hall L1

Workshop

Embodying ‘mindful’ sociality: A new relational approach to credulous listening (PCP) in critical conversations in executive coaching and family life

Shenaz Kelly Rawat

Director & Co-Founder of The Learning Partnership, Ireland

Multiple interconnected crises in our world call for an increasingly skilful response in Relational Conversations in all contexts. In effect a skilfully led conversation can be transformational and speaks to our sense of agency. How do we, as PCP practitioners intentionally cultivate the essential qualities of receptivity to others and yet our own emotion regulation in increasingly complex circumstances? Embodied Mindful Sociality as a practice could be foundational in developing Kellian Choice by further encouraging curiosity, building resilience and cultivating skilful response in the accelerated complexity of modern life. This workshop is an opportunity to open a dialogue about what you choose to pay attention to in the conversations in your life: this may be in the context of your work, your clients, or your families. Shenaz is a Chartered Occupational Psychologist, Leadership Coach and a Constructivist Psychotherapist who has sought to bring Personal Construct Psychology and Philosophy ‘into conversations’ with the purpose of building cultures that intentionally speak to ‘core values’ of Leadership presence and openness. She will lead a short series of Embodied Practices based on Foundational PCP concepts and ‘Insight Dialogue’ (Gregory Kramer, 2007), a relationally based Mindfulness training.

Thursday 14th, 11:45-12:30, Lecture Hall T4

Workshop

Explore Your Meanings–EYME: From the repertory grid to virtual reality

Guillem Feixas

Universitat de Barcelona, Spain

Explore Your Meanings (EYME) is a technology platform (eyme-vr.com) based on the repertory grid technique devised to capture your mental map for construing self and others. It begins with an automatized, structured interview for obtaining elements, eliciting constructs (dyadic method), and rating in a user-friendly interface. EYME provides a graphical representation of their construals in both navigable 3D and Virtual Reality (VR) that allows a guided exploration facilitating personal development and/or therapeutic change. EYME is conceived as a technology to assist professionals in exploring their clients' sense of personal identity and to explore possible routes for development and change. Exploring clients' personal meanings about self and others in an immersive VR environment is usually experienced by them as a powerful opportunity not only to discover who they are but also to experiment with possibilities for change, guided by a professional in the safety of the therapeutic relationship. EYME can be a powerful tool not only for clinicians conducting psychotherapy but also for coaches, business consultants, and market researchers. In all these applications, EYME is an essential tool to increase the person's self-knowledge, appraisal of personal goals, and potential for change.

Friday 15th, 17:15-18:00, Lecture Hall T4

Symposium

Writing with (rather than to or about) “the other” potentialities and risks for the co-writing experience in the clinical context

Elena Faccio, L. Aquili, M. Rocelli

Department of Philosophy, Sociology, Pedagogy and Applied Psychology, University of Padua, Italy

The symposium is aimed at exploring the potentialities of *co-writing*, a practice where a clinician and a patient are mutually engaged in jointly or collaboratively writing a narrative related to the patient's experience. Unlike a typical set of therapeutic techniques, co-writing is based on sharing perspectives and meanings about the patient's personal experience of crisis, recovery and the therapeutic process. If we want to gain knowledge of another human being, that human being's voice should have the right to be listened to and acknowledged. Through co-writing, epistemic asymmetry between the 'expert' and the 'other' is discarded in favor of intersubjective dialogue. During the symposium we will explore the contexts in which this practice has been or may be used: medicine, psychotherapy and research; secondly, we want to present and discuss specific objectives, connected benefits and risks and thirdly we will provide some examples for the clinical practice. Writing *with* the other is just the tip of the iceberg of an approach which may foster new responses to clients' dilemmas in the Mental Health System Care, which relies on a renewed conceptualization and epistemology of the mental disease nature and that may lead to a radical revision of the clinical encounter.

Friday 15th, 16:30-17:00, Lecture Hall T1

Paper

The experience with the other during the Covid-19 pandemic: A narrative-hermeneutic perspective

Manola Alfredetti¹, Alessandra Petrolati², Anna Celli²

¹ Institute of Narrative Constructivism ICoNa SB, Padua, Italy

² School of Specialization in Constructivist Psychotherapy, CESIPc, Florence, Italy

This paper proposes a clinical reflective practice in the context of the COVID -19 pandemic. The theoretical framework of our analysis is narrative-hermeneutic constructivism, the Italian elaboration of personal construct theory. Our study is based on questions that developed out of our therapeutic practice. In particular, we asked ourselves how our clients construed the pandemic event, and how they experienced it within their personal relationships. We also wondered how different personal ways to live relationships were revisited in the light of changed social and material conditions. We will explore in particular some aspects of commonality and individuality in our clients' narratives, in order to understand whether and how this experience may have facilitated the development of disorder (defined as a nonvalidation choice) and to clarify the ways it changed the experience of the 'self-in-relationship'. Finally, we describe some professional strategies adopted in the therapeutic process with these clients.

Friday 15th, 17:00-17:30, Lecture Hall T1

Paper

Relationships between invalidation, sociality breakdown and conspiracy thinking during the coronavirus pandemic – The key role of hostility

Miroslav Filip¹, Dominik Kovář¹, Michaela Jalůvková²

¹ Institute of Psychology of the Czech Academy of Sciences, Czech Republic

² Department of Psychology, Faculty of Social Sciences of the Masaryk University, Brno, Czech Republic

In the paper we report results from two mixed-method studies that investigated previously reported relationships between stress, distrust and pandemic conspiracy thinking. Previous studies are limited, because the relationships are reported only in terms of statistical findings without their deeper understanding. In the framework of PCP, we conceptualize stress as invalidation of personal constructs and distrust as a key phenomenon linked to a breakdown of sociality. Following Winter and Reed (2020), we hypothesize that the dynamic and unpredictable events of the pandemic may cause massive invalidation. In order to prevent massive invalidation, people more likely use the strategy of hostility (i.e., extorting validity of dysfunctional personal constructs), which in turn disrupts people's mutual construing (sociality) and leads to increase in distrust. Hostility and increase in distrust lead to suspiciousness and conspiracy thinking. In our studies, all participants who prevented massive invalidation through hostility were distrustful of institutions and of people with different views of the pandemic. Furthermore, they were mostly suspicious or even believed pandemic conspiracy theories. We argue that, in contrast to mainstream research, the PCP approach provides psychological understanding of the relationships between conspiracy thinking and factors both at individual (stress) and social (distrust) levels.

Friday 15th, 17:30-18:00, Lecture Hall T1

Paper

Body construction in the time of Covid: A PCP research

Elisa Cappellari, Francesca Del Rizzo

Institute of Constructivist Psychology, Padua, Italy

The COVID-19 pandemic made us face a new way of construing our world. Words like “lockdown”, “quarantine”, “social distancing”, and “gatherings” started permeating our language, shaping a reality sometimes obscure, at other times frightening. The body especially became a place to test out our most threatening predictions, or, using Kelly’s words (1955), anticipations, about us and our future, and our perceptual field was often limited to our worrying about physical symptoms. In order to get over the mind-body dichotomy, with this paper, and from a Personal Construct Psychology point of view, we ask ourselves if people’s construction of their body is changing as a consequence of the complex changes we are going through in adapting to this changed social world. In doing so we used a semi-structured interview and then reviewed it using techniques of textual analysis.

Friday 15th, 16:30-17:00, Lecture Hall L1

Paper

The usefulness of tattoos for constructing and expressing one’s narrative identity

Danny L. McCarty, David D. Christian

University of South Alabama, USA

Narrative identity, the process through which individuals use personal stories to identify who they are, how they came to be, and where they are heading, has been given increased attention in constructivist literature. Through the construction of narrative identity, people strive to integrate past and present experiences with future goals to develop a unified and purposeful approach to life. While previous research has linked narrative identity development to positive outcomes and identified pertinent life-story constructs (McAdams & McLean, 2013), additional research is needed to understand culturally acceptable mechanisms useful for sharing life-stories. In this presentation we will explore how tattoo narratives are useful for constructing and expressing narrative identity. To this end, we will explore the results of a study in which we conducted a thematic narrative analysis of interviews with 10 participants regarding their tattoos, using deductive coding based on McAdams and McLean’s (2013) life-story constructs of agency, communion, redemption, contamination, meaning making, exploratory narrative processing, and coherent positive resolution. Preliminary results reveal all life-story constructs were present throughout the narratives, and participants used tattoos and their narratives to make sense of past experiences, direct their present functioning, and guide them towards their future.

Friday 15th, 17:00-17:45, Lecture Hall L1

Paper

Predictive power of fuzzy cognitive maps on the acquisition of desired personal change

Luis Angel Saúl, Alejandro Sanfeliciano

Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia (UNED). Madrid, Spain

Through the use of the Implication Grid and with the use of the GridFCM program, Fuzzy Cognitive Maps (FCMs) are generated that give us an account of the structure and dynamics of the Personal Construct System (PCS). The FCMs are mathematical models with predictive capacity that use fuzzy logic and methodology drawn from algebra and graph theory. This allows us to generate for each individual scenarios of the possible evolution of his or her Personal Construct System (PCS) and to detect the difficulties of change through the identification of inconsistencies in the system and associated mathematical indices. Data from a three-month longitudinal study of the process of acquiring desired changes in a set of more than 700 subjects is presented. The predictive power of these FCMs will be analysed, through the correlation of the indices and outputs generated a priori by the GridFCM, with the results of the changes reported by the subjects at the end of the study. We recommend reading the paper: Saúl, L. A., Sanfeliciano, A., Botella, L., Perea, R., & Gonzalez-Puerto, J. A. (2022). Fuzzy Cognitive Maps as a Tool for Identifying Cognitive Conflicts That Hinder the Adoption of Healthy Habits. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 19(3). <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph19031411>

Saturday 16th, 11:30-12:00, Lecture Hall T3

Paper

Meaning reconstruction in loss: An online protocol

João Batista¹, Daniela Alves¹, João Tiago Oliveira¹, Robert A. Neimeyer²

¹ Center for Psychology Research, School of Psychology, University of Minho, Braga, Portugal

² Department of Psychology, University of Memphis, USA

With the recognition by the World Health Organization that approximately 10% of the bereaved may suffer from complicated, prolonged and preoccupying responses to bereavement, there is a need for specialized grief therapies that can be delivered effectively and accessibly to mourners in need of intervention. Although being a universal experience, grief is also uniquely subjective, a feature that grief therapy should encompass. The Meaning in loss (MIL) protocol is based in the meaning reconstruction model, combining constructivist and narrative approaches, being structured yet flexible and responsive to clients' needs and characteristics. The MIL was implemented as a 12-16 session protocol for treating prolonged grief, offering videoconference-based therapy with trained clinicians. The preliminary clinical trial included 25 clients, from which 21 finished the intervention. The dropout rate (28%) and the feedback given by the clients shows the feasibility of the online protocol. Results showed that at the end of therapy the severity of the symptoms of complicated grief, depression and overall distress was significantly lower than at the beginning. Changes in meaning making were marginally significant. These findings indicate that the MIL protocol can be a meaningful way of helping people to deal with their losses.

Saturday 16th, 12:00-12:30, Lecture Hall T3

Paper

Anticipatory mourning, growth and meaning-making in longitudinal narratives of young women with breast cancer: An application of meaning of loss codebook

Maria Luisa Martino¹, Daniela Lemmo¹, Ines Testoni², Erika Iacona², Robert A. Neimeyer³, Maria Francesca Freda¹

¹ Department of Humanities, Federico II University Naples, Italy

² FISPPA Department, University of Padua, Italy

³ Department of Psychology, University of Memphis; Portland Institute for Loss and Transition, Portland, USA

Breast cancer (BC) in women under 50 is a critical and potential traumatic experience that can upset a woman's life during a crucial phase of her lifespan. Anticipatory mourning linked to the diagnosis of BC can produce a series of inevitable losses similar to those of the bereaved. Narration can be one tool to grow through the experience, reconfigure time perspectives during and after the illness and to construct meaning-making as a key aspect when dealing with BC. The aim of this study is to apply the Meaning of Loss Codebook (MLC) to the narrative context of young women with BC. An ad-hoc narrative interview was administered to 17 women at four times during the first year of treatment. A thematic analysis was performed using the Meaning in Loss Codebook (MLC) adopting a bottom-up and top-down methodology. Results highlight the MLC's usefulness in capturing the whole nuances of meanings embodied in first year narratives concerning experiences of the women from the loss of diagnosis to recognition of resources and growth to cope with BC. This study attests the possibility of extending use of the MLC to observe the longitudinal elaboration of the experience of BC in addition to its established validity in the context of bereavement and loss.

Saturday 16th, 11:00-11:30, Lecture Hall L1

Paper

Tightroping between managerial and professional standards: University teachers handling the politico-economic context of higher education

Marie-Louise Österlind

Kristianstad University, Sweden

University teachers are the “key” profession educating all other professions and performing important research. This should provide strong rationales for maintaining good working conditions within academia. However, this is seldom the case. Even though many feel privileged; appreciating the freedom, autonomy, inspiration and career options. They often balance between reforms based on managerial logic from the business world and pedagogic processes informed by professional academic logic. Complexity, intensification, frequent change and reorganization often have negative effects on their ability to do a good job according to professional standards, at the risk of research and teaching quality and student results. Which in turn can lower work-satisfaction and impair health and well-being of the teacher/researcher. This paper explores the tightroping between managerial and professional standards performed by university teachers from a constructivist perspective; drawing on the concept of teachers' personal and professional ideas about practice as superordinate constructs subsuming other constructs. What happens to the teacher when the love of teaching and research is threatened by managerial standards, when the superordinate construct is challenged? The results can provide support to individuals and groups and inform recommendations about working conditions and models for higher education policy and practice designed to improve quality.

Saturday 16th, 11:30-12:00, Lecture Hall L1

Paper

I hate you because I loved you

Caril Miniati

CESIPc, Centro studi in psicoterapia cognitiva, Padua, Italy

My experience in the field of forensic psychology offers the possibility to reflect on the meeting and the subsequent perturbation of two worlds. When former spouses start divorce proceedings, and in particular as they fight for custody of their children, my job is to deal with their anticipations and their system of constructs in order to develop a suitable suggestion for the judge. It is a very challenging and daunting experience that can also, in the best case, lay the foundations for a new way beyond love and hate.

Saturday 16th, 11:00-12:00, Lecture Hall C1

Symposium

Publication avenues for constructivist/constructionist scholars, researchers, and practitioners: A presentation of and dialogue among the main national and international journals on or around PCP

Marco Gemignani¹

¹ Universidad Loyola Andalucía, Psychology Department, Sevilla, España

Within and around PCP, at least four journals have contributed to international and, for Italy, national advancement of constructivist psychologies and their applications. This symposium gathers the editors of four main peer-reviewed journals concerning Personal Construct Psychology: the Journal of Constructivist Psychology, Personal Construct Theory & Practice, Costruttivismi (Constructivisms), and the Rivista Italiana di Costruttivismo (the Italian Journal of Constructivism). For each respective journal, the editor will present its mission, history, uniqueness, and future vision within PCP, psychology, and other disciplines. Editors will also dialogue about possible collaborations and shared projects that may further the scientific presence of PCP within academic and professional psychology.

Saturday 16th, 14:30-15:15, Lecture Hall T3

Extended paper

Encounters of a third kind: Finding meaning in complexity

Shenaz Kelly Rawat¹, Jogin Thakore²

¹ Director of The Learning Partnership, Ireland

² Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland and Trinity College, Dublin, Ireland

We shall present our shared experience of exploring parental identity in the context of love and threat in our family. This is the result of a multidimensional journey, leading to radical Credulous Listening, (Kelly 1964) and the shifting of core role identities, in the context of being both parents and professionals: in the role as a Mother and Constructivist Psychologist and in the role of a Father and Psychiatrist. This paper will speak of our collective experience of deepening our lived understanding of the 'Community of Selves' (Miller Mair) while staying committed to the superordinate constructs of the well-being of our son. It is a personal journey of core role reconstruing, renewed understanding of the Kellian concepts of Fragmentation and Permeability underpinned by the Emotions of Transition. Ultimately this is a narrative of deep challenge yet encouragement to practice the philosophy of PCP as a framework for personal and relational understanding from multiple perspectives.

Saturday 16th, 15:15-16:00, Lecture Hall T3

Extended paper

From personal towards agonistic constructivism

Vladimir Džinović¹, Dragan Vesić¹, Sanja Grbić²

¹ Institute for Educational Research, Belgrade, Republic of Serbia

² Institute for Educational Research and University of Belgrade, Faculty of Philosophy,
Department of Psychology, Republic of Serbia

We propose to consider a new constructivist approach that is rooted in Heraclitean agonism, Kelly's constructivism, Foucault's analytics of power, and Hermans' dialogical self theory. One of its key assumptions is that the dynamics of psychological life result from the interplay between the opposing tendencies towards long-term dominance and plurality of personal perspectives or voices rather than from the establishment of the core organization of semantic processes. The agonistic approach further implies that a person cannot possess a coherent and integrated self as a singular center of psychological processes. Instead, we propose a model of the self as a decentralized, socially constructed, tensed and ever-changing strategic situation embracing personal voices, other people, interpersonal relations and the institutionalized context as equal protagonists that are immersed in the struggle for predominance. The agonistic approach to constructivism brings additional categories of relations between the dimensions of personal and social meanings as its practical benefit. Examples from relevant identity research and psychotherapy show that voices are not exclusively superordinate or subordinate to other voices, as is the case in the system of personal constructs, but can cooperate with other voices, oppose them, identify with other voices while partly questioning them, and can be modified by other voices while keeping their own ideologies.

Saturday 16th, 14:30-16:00, Lecture Hall L1

Workshop

Body of a psychotherapist – Needs, strengths and resources in transition

Sladjana Živković

Serbian Constructivist Association, Republic of Serbia

Constructivism is seen as widely open for encounter with other ideas, views, techniques and therapy orientations. I am not so sure that it is so easy to connect constructivism with ideas of body psychotherapies and practices. My interest as a constructivist psychotherapist is connection of body and mind in psychotherapy. I explored meditation, mindfulness, gender theories, birth practices, dance movement meditation, Rosen method bodywork, Body psychotherapy, Body psychodrama, Somatic experience and trauma healing. Here I would like to explore the body of the psychotherapist as a tool that can be used for marking and construing important transitions. The main focus will be elicitation of constructs referring to body needs, strengths and resources in life as well as in a professional role. On the other hand, I will map professional as well as life transitions of a psychotherapist as personal constructions. The goal will be to connect the two. How we can use body constructs to help in exploring and making sense of life and professional transitions? Can we make more freedom for us in construing new dimensions of meaning by bringing more concessions to body processes and nonverbal constructs? How useful can this process be for peer supervision or quick professional check up?

The development of group psychotherapy processes in the experience of care with frontotemporal dementia. A PCP approach

Cinzia Bussè¹, Mariella Casa², Federica Chiaro¹, Massimo Giliberto¹, Marco Gemignani³

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In this work we used the '4-stage model' to explore how the meaning of caring developed in a group experience in PCP. Group participants were seven family caregivers of persons with frontotemporal dementia (FTD). We mainly observed high anxiety in anticipating the disease experience, self-centred dependency, pre-emptive constructs of caring and role threat. Group processes developed into six online meetings facilitated by three trainee psychotherapists. In Stage-1, individual anticipations moved in the direction of sharing a common caring experience, reducing the latency of the C-P-C cycle. In Stage-2, dependency dispersion was particularly encouraged in discriminating between similarities and differences with caring role in the group. Stage-3 was consistent with two experiments in the construction of primary and secondary role-relationships. The meaning of care was permeabilized. Construing the outgroup became more propositional. The group strengthened a collective identity. In the last Stage participants acted collaboratively in the co-construction of the group experience as no longer feeling alone in caring. Participants differentiated their dependency and moved to propositional constructions of disease experience and relationship with the loved one. We propose to consider PCP approach as a possible "lens" to observe, understand and facilitate psychotherapy group processes with caregivers of persons with FTD.

From attachment theory to self-characterization technique: Study on psychotherapists in training

Cristina Liviana Caldiroli¹, Rossella Procaccia², Alice Mazzei³, Dino Mazzei³, Antonio Caruso⁴, Marco Castiglioni¹

¹ Department of Human Sciences for Education "Riccardo Massa", University of Milano-Bicocca, Milan, Italy

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⁴ Panta Rei (Centre for Socio-Constructionist Psychotherapy), Milan, Italy

The present study, based on the Psychology of Personal Constructs (Kelly, 1955) and the Theory of Attachment (Bowlby, 1963), aimed to (I) assess the characteristics of actual and ideal self-characterization of a group of psychotherapists-in-training; (II) assess the presence of correlations between self and others representations and attachment style. The sample was composed of 36 psychotherapy graduate students (ages 28-53, mean: 33.31, s.d.: 4.95). The Attachment Style Questionnaire (ASQ), the Adult Attachment Questionnaire (AAQ), and self-characterization related to the real and ideal self were administrated. Initial results indicated that there are substantial differences between actual self-characterization, i.e., the subject's level of perception of reality, versus ideal self-characterization, i.e., how the subject imagines the reality he or she would like. Correlational analysis showed that as scores on the security scale increased, references to one's own personality, the personality of others, and personal satisfaction and success increased, while emotions of anger, frustration, and generally negative references decreased. Similarly, as scores on the insecurity scale increase, generalizations, emotions related to sadness and guilt, evasions, and

interrupted sentences increase, while positive emotions decrease. Therefore, the results indicate self-characterization as a sensitive tool for eliciting the attachment style of the writing subject. A personal construct psychology interpretation of bereavement experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic in Italy

Sara Filisetti, Lorenza Entilli, Sabrina Cipolletta
Department of General Psychology, University of Padua, Italy

This study explores and differentiates over the experience of bereavement of family members whose loved ones died of COVID-19 in the first wave of the pandemic in Lombardy (Italy). Telematic semi-structured interviews were conducted with twenty individuals and thematic analysis identified five macro categories: illness trajectory of COVID-19 patients, experience of loss, personal resources and support search, impact of COVID -19 on mourners' life and looking forward. The results were read within the theoretical framework of Personal Construct Psychology, in terms of the transitions of anxiety, aggression, guilt, and threat. The anxiety due to the sudden change, uncertainty and distortion of habits characterized most of participants' experiences. The threat was observed when the loss led to comprehensive changes in the mourners' construct systems due to their dependencies mainly concentrated on the departed, while guilt characterized those who felt that, with the loss of their loved one, they had lost their role in life. Finally, the aggression was traced back to those who accepted, processed the loss and discovered new resources to cope with the loss. These results may be useful to plan personalized intervention strategies based on understanding personal experiences.

Narrative construction of chronic illness: A research on the Sense of Grip on Disease (SoGoD)

Assunta Maiello, Ersilia Auriemma, Maria Luisa Martino, Maria Francesca Freda
Department of Humanities, University of Naples Federico II, Italy

Adopting a socio-constructivist perspective, we intend to present a research on the Sense of Grip on Disease (SoGoD). SoGoD is a conceptual framework developed to detect narrative meaning processes through which people make sense of their disease. In the context of primary care, an ad hoc narrative interview (Freda et al., 2019) has been administered to 30 people with chronic diseases, in the period from July to September 2021. The corpus of interviews has been analyzed through an original semiotic methodology based on the exploration of five narrative functions: 1. Temporal articulation; 2. Interpretation; 3. Emotional processing; 4. Disease Management; 5. Social support. These functions are representative of different dimensions of narrative sensemaking processes and they foster different dimensions of adjustment to illness (De Luca Picione, Freda, & Savarese, 2021). Starting from the coding of the interviews, we have carried out a Multiple Correspondence Analysis (MCA) and a Cluster Analysis to analyze the main SoGoD configurations. Different profiles of Sense of Grip have been identified, with a good adaptation of the model to the data. These profiles could help clinicians to encourage patients' adjustment to disease.

The doctor-patient relationship at the time of the COVID-19 pandemic: An exploratory study in an Italian emergency Department

Simona Martucci, Sara Previdi, Sabrina Cipolletta
Department of General Psychology, University of Padua, Italy

The encounter with the other has peculiar characteristics in the doctor-patient relationship. The present study aims to explore the doctor-patient relationship in an Italian emergency department during the COVID-19 pandemic. The participants were 22 healthcare professionals, specifically

nurses and doctors, working in the emergency department of a hospital in Northern Italy, and 21 patients accessing this department. Data collection used semi-structured interviews and a thematic analysis was conducted using ATLAS.ti software. Four recurring themes were observed: the role of the doctor-patient relationship in the care process, personal experience during the pandemic, the experience of the pandemic in the emergency department and the doctor-patient relationship during the pandemic. Fear of infection, restrictions, dealing with an unknown disease and the overcrowding in the emergency unit have caused changes in the doctor-patient relationship: some patients were fearful of spending time in the emergency department and perceived the relationship as more impersonal because the protection devices; stress and fatigue of healthcare professionals made emotional closeness with patients challenging. The changes in the doctor-patient relationship pointed out by the present study exemplify the changes that the COVID-19 pandemic has implied in the horizon of interpersonal relationships.

Growing inclusion

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In line with the personal construct psychology approach to dependency, each person can be a resource for the other. Each personal characteristic can be transformed into a valuable relational tool for the other. In mutual exchange, individual limits become a source of enrichment for the other. In this sense, the protagonists of the exchange become children with disabilities and elderly volunteers, each bearer of limits and resources and, in the reciprocal relationship, each puts their own baggage at stake, thus becoming a value for the growth of the other. Thereby, community becomes an educating community that contrasts social isolation and exclusion.

The Equine-Assisted Therapy (EAT) in disability: Effects on general well-being and personal care skills

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The Equine- Assisted Therapy (EAT) belongs to the sports activities for rehabilitation and it is proposed as a form of occupational, physical and speech therapy to individuals with disabilities and deficits in processing sensory and motor inputs. The EAT may also represent an experience of aggregation and social inclusion in sport and in the associative places of daily life. From a PCP perspective, the core of the EAT is the relation between the patient and the horse, while the therapist can play the role of the Kellian “expert in the how”. Most studies on the motor efficacy of EAT focused on the child population, mainly on Infantile Cerebral Palsy and Autism Spectrum Disorders. Moreover, further research is needed to obtain useful information about the impact of the EAT on general well-being and personal care skills to customize the individual rehabilitation treatment of people with various disabilities. This would allow to promote a better knowledge of the EAT and its spread in more territories that relate with people with disabilities. The research project is currently in progress at the riding stables of the Veneto region with patients of the Clinical Centre “Stella Polare” of Padua.

GridFCM: R package for the generation of Fuzzy Cognitive Maps through the Implication Grid

Alejandro Sanfeliciano, Luis Ángel Saúl

Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia (UNED). Madrid, Spain

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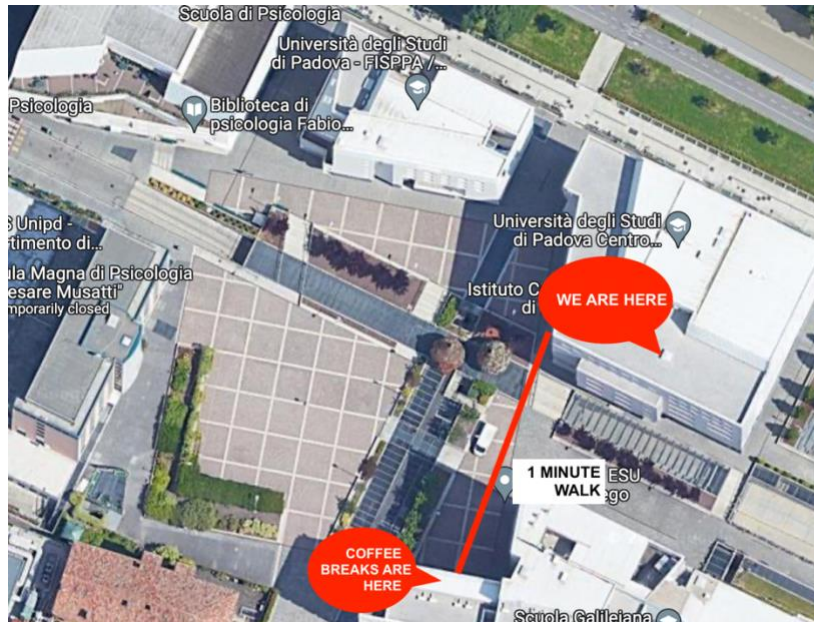


FIRST FLOOR



COFFEE BREAKS

All coffee breaks will be held outside the building, just 1 minute walk away from the congress venue in the open air.



LUNCHES

All lunches will be provided at the **University Restaurant (Ristor ESU Nord Piovego)**, located in Via Ugo Bassi. 350mt, 4 minutes' walk from the University



ABOUT PADOVA



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