1. WHAT'S HAPPENING?

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

People seemed surprised at the numbers of Australasians attending - 13 Australians and one New Zealander (plus a couple of partners). There was a large group of
Spaniards involved, with simultaneous translation in one room where the plenary sessions were held. I've included a probably incomplete list of presentations later in the newsletter.

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

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

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

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

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

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

2. APS INTEREST GROUP

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

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

Membership records for the APS members of the interest group will be maintained by the National APS office, with non-APS members being maintained by the group. This will complicate things for me.
substantially and reduce my capacity to do searches by postcode, for example, for certain mailouts.

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

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

3. PCP AND EDUCATION

This appeared on the pcp email from Bonnie Shapiro.

"Recently I published a book that may be of interest to some colleagues working in the area. It is entitled, *What Children Bring to Light: A Constructivist Perspective on Children's Learning in Science*. The book is designed to introduce teachers and researchers in science education and other fields to constructivism in educational practice and how it has developed. I attempt to link the historical development of constructivism with the "alternative frameworks" literature--work in science education which focusses on learners' ideas about phenomena and which suggests how teachers might better use the learner's ideas and own efforts to make meaning as a basis for curriculum development and classroom activities. The heart of the book is a set of six case studies of children learning about the topic light in their grade five classroom. Each child's constructs regarding ideas about what it means to learn science in the classroom setting is presented.

In the latter chapters I propose use of the construct, 'personal orientation to science learning' as a basis for organizing learning--At the center of this construct is 'the learning person' whose own efforts to make connections among ideas is given high status. The remaining sections suggest approaches that might be used by a teacher interested in providing opportunities for learners to construct meaning--opportunities to use small group interaction, graphic organizers such as concept mapping, tools such as the classroom profile as a devise for sensitive listening. 'The learning person' is at the center of this model, rather than the curriculum which is more typically placed at the center. The term 'learning person' is used to allow us to consider the teacher as learner in addition to the "student."

The book is published by Teachers College Press (New York, 1994).
I have written several other articles applying a personal construct theory approach to research in education. I apologize for this message being so lengthy, but I would like to suggest that other educators or those interested in educational applications send me references -- articles that have been particularly useful in considering educational issues from a constructivist perspective--particularly those using personal construct theory. I will collect them and put them together and send them out to anyone interested. Send these to my personal e-mail address below.

Bonnie Shapiro Telephone (403) 220-3844
726 EDT Fax (403) 282-8479
The University of Calgary Internet: bshapiro@acs.ucalgary.ca
Calgary, Alberta T2N 1N4

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5 UNIV OF WOLLONGONG PERSONAL CONSTRUCT GROUP

Room 19:1067, Wednesdays 9-10.30

Date Topic Facilitator

2/8 Discussion re David Green's Everyone "Womens' construction of her alternatives: Adolescent pregnancy and the choice corollary"

9/8 Constructivist model of risk Lindsay Oades taking

16/8 Anxiety, attributional styles & Mohammad socio-demographic factors as Khodayraifard predictors of academic performance

23/8 Working with the spouses of Jan Howells alcoholics

30/8 ?????

13/9 Dementia and sexuality Marilyn Rudd
20/9 Relationships and emotion Lyn Toms
21-26/9 VISIT BY TOM RAVENETTE
11/10 Sexual assault counseling Carole Carter
18/10 Construct elicitation: Triadic vs. Kathleen self-characterisation Houldsworth
25/10 Dependency and empathy Kaye Poston
1/11 The measurement of meaning Peter Caputi & Lindsay Oades

6 1997 INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS

Plan now for the

XII International Congress

on Personal Construct Psychology

5-10 August 1997*

University of Washington

Seattle, Washington, USA

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

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

The program will be diverse and stimulating.

For program information, contact

April Metzler, Lehigh University,
111 Research Drive, Bethlehem, PA 180154792
Phone: (610) 7586093
* We asked in Barcelona that these dates be changed so that Australians and New Zealanders could attend.

7 CONSTRUCTIVISM IN PSYCHOTHERAPY

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Published by the American Psychological Association.

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

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Personal Construct Special Interest Group
and Australasian Personal Construct Group
School of Psychology,
University of Wollongong,
Northfields Ave.
WOLLONGONG NSW, 2522

Correspondence to be sent to:
Assoc. Prof. Beverly Walker
PHONE NO: 042 213653
FAX NO: 042 214163
EMAIL: b.walker@uow.edu.au