Two Case Studies Exploring the Nature of the Tourist's Experience

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The reconstructions of two U.S. tourists who visited Britain were used to explore the utility of Kelly's Personal Construct Theory (PCT) for better understanding the nature of tourists' experiences. Data were gathered from five structured interviews with each respondent, spaced over an eight month period. A series of four repertory grids were developed with each respondent, aided by the PLANET software package. These were used to identify shifts in constructs attributable to the vacation. Results from the testing of four hypotheses indicated the extent to which each individual's vacation could be described as experience.

KEYWORDS: Personal Construct Theory, tourist experience, phenomenology

Introduction

At the level of an individual tourist, the primary goals of a leisure trip or vacation are likely to be experiential. Although, by definition, goals will be sought through travel outside the home environment, this geographical dimension is merely the mechanism through which experiential goals are met. The experiential dimension of leisure and tourism trips has not been widely explored. Most analyses of tourists' experiences appearing in the literature are based upon Clawson and Knetsch's (1966) model of the recreation experience. This model involves five more or less distinct and yet interacting phases: (1) An anticipation phase, (2) travel to the site, (3) on-site activity, (4) return travel, and (5) a recollection phase. For example, Hammitt (1980) provided an empirical test of this model by measuring changes of mood amongst participants on an educational/recreational field trip. He produced weak evidence which supported the five-stage model. The model has also served as a conceptual framework for studies concerned with the role of perception in recreation (Mercer, 1971), and environmental psychology in tourism (Fridgen, 1984). This geographical operationalization implicitly fits the mechanistic model of the person which predominates in the tourism literature and was caricatured in the type of tourist behavior graphically described by Boorstin (1962).

The study reported here considers a very different model of the person stemming from the work of Kelly (1955), who viewed each individual as a "personal scientist". It represented an attempt to explore the ability of Kelly's Personal Construct Theory (PCT) for better conceptualizing and understanding the nature of tourists' experiences. Any research that takes its inspiration from Kelly's theory requires the application of particular methods in order to be consistent with the ontology and epistemology that flows from
his philosophical position. This article demonstrates these methods in an application of Kelly’s general theory to the specific case of tourists’ experiences.

Since the publication of Kelly’s work, a relatively small but dedicated international community of psychologists, clinicians and therapists, and social scientists have continued to apply and elaborate on Personal Construct Psychology (PCP). Kelly’s work has been shown to have influenced leading proponents of existential (Soffer, 1990), humanistic (Epting & Leitner, 1992) and cognitive (Warren, 1990, 1991) psychology.

Kelly’s basic psychological premise is encapsulated in the fundamental postulate of his theory which states, “A person’s processes are psychologically channelized by the ways in which he anticipates events” (Kelly, 1955, p. 46). Kelly states his philosophy in these terms: “The universe is existing and man is gradually coming to understand it” (p. 6). For Kelly, man is a prototype scientist continually seeking prediction of his world. Kelly’s “man” acts through a structured network which leads towards the future and equips him or her to anticipate real events:

Essentially, construct theory postulates that the sine qua non of human existence is our tendency to attribute unique meanings to the data of our experience. These meanings, termed “personal constructs” serve not only as interpretation of past events but also as hypotheses about events yet to be encountered. (Epting & Neimeyer, 1984, p. 2)

In part, this study is responsive to Cohen’s (1979) call for tourism research which is “processual, contextual, comparative and emic” (pp. 31-32). Merely going through a series of travel stages or events does not constitute an experience in Kelly’s terms:

Anticipated constructs are working hypotheses, they are successively revised and undergo a progressive evolution. The person re-constructs. This is experience. A succession of events do not themselves constitute experience. It is not what happens around him that makes man experienced; it is the successive constructing and re-constructing of what happens that enriches the experiences of life. (Kelly, 1955, p. 73)

In Kelly’s view the activities and behaviors which contribute to personal development are not based on biological or situational factors (Viney, 1992). Growth, as experienced by optimally functioning people, is characterized by the process of consistently completing what the PCT describes as “full cycles of experience” (Landfield & Leitner, 1980, p. 57). Kelly’s cycle of experience is comprised of five steps: anticipation, investment, encounter, confirmation, and disconfirmation, and constructive revision.

1. **Anticipation** is the forecasting of events in such a manner that an individual actually looks to see what is coming next.

2. **Investment** involves diving in and getting wet; the person must become immersed in the problem.

3. **Encounter** is an open, a rigid or destructive force that becomes known and affects the self.

4. **Confirmation and disconfirmation** are learned by the person as a scientist, the scientist observes and discriminates from the evidence what constructions which are then the basis of life that are often re-built or replaced. From these an idea is formed, which is then fully grown.

For Kelly, complete progress, “The cycle of events is only complete if it terminates in fresh hope” (p. 73). Kelly’s PCP offers a concept of understanding that facilitates a sense of personal growth and development.

The conceptual basis for this study is a corollary of PCT which “replicates” (Kelly, 1955) of “man as scientist” (pp. 30-31) and the corroboration of Kelly’s method: the processual, contextual, comparative and emic method.

The grid is perhaps best described by Bannister (1977, p. 44) as a “matrix” of places and situations.

**In contrast to the above method, the interpretation of interviews is performed by respondents are invited to respond to the grid**
3. **Encounter** is an open interaction between "person" and "events", not a rigid or destructive forcing of the person's perspective of the events . . . that which becomes known through such authentic encounters profoundly affects the self.

4. **Confirmation and Disconfirmation.** Following Kelly's metaphor of the person-as-scientist, the optimally functioning person must be able to assess from the evidence what has just happened. This involves the person creating constructions which are necessarily new and tentative.

5. **Constructive Revision** is the stage in which all of the greater moments of life that are often recognized and labeled as "growth experiences" take place. From these an individual is enlivened and invigorated, and feels more fully grown.

For Kelly, completing the full cycle of experience is a key to human progress, "The cycle of human experiences remains incomplete unless it terminates in fresh hopes never before envisioned" (Kelly, 1977a, p. 9). Kelly's PCP offers a conceptual framework for understanding how travel might facilitate a sense of personal discovery and progress as these are defined by leisure travelers themselves and not by an external observer.

The conceptual basis of this study was founded on the Construction corollary of PCP which states, "A person anticipates events by construing their replications" (Kelly, 1955, p. 50). This corollary is central to Kelly's view of "man as scientist" (Kelly, 1955, p. 5). A person's experiences or thoughts about reality are regarded as tentative hypotheses that may or may not be true.

### Principles and Use of the Repertory Grid

Difficulties in exploring the constructions of his clients led Kelly to devise the repertory grid test. Despite the use of the word "test", the repertory grid should not be confused with standard psychological tests. Fransela and Bannister (1977, p. 4) consider the test to be part of a conversational method:

The grid is perhaps best looked on as a particular form of structured interview. Our usual way of exploring another person's construct system is by conversation. In talking to each other we come to understand the way the other person views his world, what goes with what for him, what implies what, what is important and unimportant and in what terms they seek to assess people and places and situations. The grid formalizes this process and assigns mathematical values to the relationships between a person's outlook on the world.

In contrast to in-depth interviews where thick descriptive data are recorded and subsequently interpreted by the researcher, the conversation that surrounds the use of the repertory grid becomes a collaborative, immediate, interpretation of inner psychological processes. In building the grid the respondent is invited to connect constructs and to display them, thereby open-
ing up his or her perceptual frame. The conversations act, therefore, as an invitation for the researcher to enter the world of the respondent and to see events as the respondent would anticipate and interpret them. The grid's mathematical properties are revealed by a number of computer programs now available for the analysis of data (Shaw, 1989).

The repertory grid has proven invaluable to PCT researchers because it presents ideographic data within a structure (Fransella, 1984). Easterby-Smith (1981) provides a useful overview of a range of alternative grid designs in non-clinical settings. As a constructed representation of a facet of a person's life at a particular point in time, data encapsulated in a grid enable a researcher to monitor change in response to a different context. The degree of change or stability found in the pre-test and post-test grids of the same respondent may be assessed in terms of constructs or elements.

Elements are chosen to represent the area in which construing is to be investigated. Elements are the topics of inquiry. Examples of different elements that have been used in the PCT literature are: occupations, feelings, situations, diseases, rooms, shops, photographs of "pubs", photographs of people, and holiday resorts in Europe. The main criteria for elements are that (1) The elements must be within the range of convenience of the constructs to be used; and (2) They must be representative of the pool from which they are drawn. (Fransella & Bannister, 1977). Thomas and Harri-Augstein (1985) list 259 items of personal experience that have been used as elements in the elicitation of repertory grids. In this study, four categories of elements were selected: Self-as-tourist, Host Culture, Tourist Culture, and Land/City scape.

A construct is a bi-polar dimension which to some degree is an attribute or property of each element (Shaw, 1980). These bi-polar dichotomies are developed and used by individuals to enable them to ascertain the extent to which things are construed as being alike or different to other things.

The researcher may choose to supply constructs or to elicit them from a respondent (Fransella & Bannister, 1977). Alternatively, a combination of supplied and elicited constructs can be used (Harrison & Sarre, 1975). Kelly clearly indicated that constructs should be elicited from the respondent and most of the evidence on this issue supports the view that subjects prefer personal constructs to constructs offered by the experimenter (Shaw, 1980). For this reason, personal constructs were utilized in this study. Two studies have been reported in the leisure or tourism literatures that have partially adopted Kelly's approach (Pearce 1982; Riley & Palmer, 1976). However, they are essentially atheoretical applications of the repertory grid test which adapted the approach to conform with the logical positivist epistemology which predominates in the leisure and tourism literatures. In contrast, the study reported here sought to adhere faithfully to Kelly's approach.

Pearce (1982) carefully selected elements which related to the hypotheses under examination and constructs were selected from a large pool elicited from a separate group of subjects using a triading procedure. Because the elements and constructs were held constant for all respondents, Pearce was able to measure grids for change, attribute this change to the change that had occurred in this approach, Pearce used the grids that lead to a greater understanding for common external variables. This approach between a vacation and a comparison of the repertory grid. The promotion of resort and the perception of potential for the particular resort fitted the others (elements in the grid, a sample of participants recently participated in different conditions. A "great pool of grids and containing the clusters analysis was done between the resort and positions of different elements.

Data Collection

By convention, elements in the repertory grids were not to include elements in the study of their vacation experiences (Botterill, 1982). The constructs included the destination country, the destination city, the hotel, the tourist, self and photographs. The rationale for the requirement: "Construction of elements or things. But..."
was able to measure group attitudes at two points in time, analyze the data for change, attribute the change to the vacation event, and describe the change that had occurred in terms of constructs and elements. In adopting this approach, Pearce traded-off the reflexive qualities of the grid technique that lead to a greater understanding of psychological processes, for a search for common external realities that can be expressed in mean attitudinal scores. This approach also appears to infer a single causal relationship between a vacation and an attitude change.

Riley and Palmer (1976) were interested in a marketing application of the repertory grid. They wanted to demonstrate to those responsible for the promotion of resort towns how the technique could be used to discover the perceptions of potential visitors to the resort (constructs), and where one particular resort fitted into the construct space in relation (competition) to the others (elements). Having chosen 25 holiday resort towns as elements in the grid, a sample of 60 respondents living in six British cities who had recently participated in a vacation were administered the grid in survey-like conditions. A "great grid", composed of an amalgam of the respondents' grids and containing 572 constructs, produced 24 principal components and a cluster analysis was performed in order to report the relative distances between the resort towns. Results were also reported in terms of the relative positions of different resort towns using principal component matrices.

Methods

Data Collection

By convention, elements are generally displayed on the horizontal axis of the repertory grid, and constructs on the vertical (see Figure 1). The elements in this study were photographs chosen by the subjects to represent their vacations (Botterill & Crompton, 1987). In order to elicit personal constructs in the anticipation phase of the vacation, brochure photographs of the destination countries were used. Each subject selected six photographs from a large pool of brochure photographs and two photographs from their own collections, following the instructions of a researcher who requested two photographs be selected from within each of the following categories:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element Categories</th>
<th>Element Codes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Land / Cityscape</td>
<td>1, 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Host Culture</td>
<td>3, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourist Culture</td>
<td>5, 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-as-tourist</td>
<td>7, 8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The rationale for the imposition of element categories was two-fold. First, all elements in a single grid should satisfy "the range of convenience" requirement: "Constructs are discriminations that are made between people, events or things. But each applies only to a limited number of people, events
or things. Consequently, it is important to limit elements to those that represent the subject of inquiry; the range of convenience” (Fransella & Bannister, 1977, p. 13). Second, the use of broad categories enabled the researchers to exert control over the range of convenience, but allowed respondents to make individual choices as to the actual photographs used in the grid.

The inclusion of a category “Self-as-tourist” was a deliberate attempt to focus a respondent’s thinking upon him or herself in the role of a tourist. Kelly included “self” and “perfect self” in his original work (Kelly, 1955, p. 225), and many others have included an element “self” in their repertory grid studies (Fransella, 1977; Mair, 1977). Thus, the four element titles specified for the Anticipations and Return grids in this study ensured a standard range of convenience for all respondents, without reducing the idiosyncratic qualities of the grid technique.

Easterby-Smith (1981) identified four distinct methods for eliciting personal constructs: (1) supplying constructs, (2) eliciting from triads, (3) using card sorts, and (4) laddering. In this study the triading procedure was used (Fransella & Bannister, 1977), which requires respondents to distinguish between a group of three of the elements. Specifically, they were asked to identify how two of the three combinations represented the third.

Immediately following, respondents were requested to rate a computer to rate elements scales were used, where pole.

Systematic triads of all combinations of the (e.g., etc.) had been exhausted, presented to the respondents represented the full range of combinations. The sequence of constructs is shown in Figure 1.

The grid data were analyzed using Analysis, Negotiation, and Feedback. The four pairs of constructs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element Combination</th>
<th>Land or Scape</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>x</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>x</td>
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<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

x = Selected Elements

Figure 2. The sequence of constructs
identify how two of the elements were similar, and yet different from the third.

Immediately following the elicitation of a bi-polar construct, respondents were requested to position each of the elements on the construct. There are many ways to do this (Thomas & Harri-Augstein, 1985), but the preferred method in situations where the data can be analyzed using a computer is to rate elements using a scale. In this study both 5 point and 7 point scales were used, where 1 = the emergent pole, and 5 or 7 = the contrast pole.

Systematic triads of elements were presented to each respondent until all combinations of the element categories (Land/Cityscape, Host Culture, etc.) had been exhausted. In the Anticipations grid, the elements were presented to the respondent in nine triad and four dyad combinations. These represented a full range of intercategory, intra-category, and mixed category combinations. The sequenced element combinations used to elicit personal constructs are shown in Figure 2.

The grid data were analyzed using Shaw's PLANET (Personal Learning, Analysis, Negotiation, and Elicitation Techniques) software suite. The suite is comprised of eight computer programs which are designed to facilitate feedback. The four programs used in this study were FOCUS, MINUS, CORE

| Element Combination | Land/Cityscape | Host Culture | Tourist Culture | Self-as | tourist |
|---------------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------|---------|
|                     | E1  | E2  | E3  | E4  | E5  | E6  | E7  | E8  |
| 1                   | X   | X   | X   |     | X   |     |     |     |
| 2                   |     |     |     | X   | X   |     |     |     |
| 3                   | X   |     |     | X   |     |     |     |     |
| 4                   |     |     |     |     |     |     | X   | X   |
| 5                   |     |     |     |     |     |     | X   |     |
| 6                   |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| 7                   |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| 8                   |     |     |     |     |     |     | X   |     |
| 9                   | X   | X   |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| 10                  |     |     |     |     | X   |     |     |     |
| 11                  |     |     |     |     | X   |     |     |     |
| 12                  |     |     |     |     | X   |     |     |     |
| 13                  |     |     |     |     | X   |     |     |     |

X = Selected elements

Figure 2. The sequence of element combinations used to elicit personal constructs.
and PEGASUS. The outputs are designed to show the underlying relationship between a subject's elements and constructs. Interpretation and communication of the computer output was greatly aided by the adoption of the “talkback” routine devised by Thomas and Harri-Augstein (1985). FOCUS was used to analyze each of the three grids (Anticipations, Return, and Recollection) produced by each tourist. MINUS and CORE were used to analyze differences between the Anticipations Grid and the Return Grid, and PEGASUS was used to elicit the Recollections Grid.

Respondents for the study were found by approaching an American university alumni association and requesting permission to contact those who had contracted with the association to join a tour of Britain. The two case studies reported here were conducted with a married couple, Fred and Nell, who volunteered to participate in the study. Fred was aged 72 and was a retired agricultural extension agent with the university, while Nell had always been a homemaker.

In general, data were collected from conversations held on a tripartite basis between Fred, Nell, and a researcher, although grid elicitation, analysis, and feedback was undertaken on a one-to-one, researcher to respondent, basis.
Results

The model upon which the research design was based (Figure 3) was developed by Beck (1980) and a detailed description of it can be found in Botterill (1988). Five interviews were conducted with the two respondents over a period of approximately eight months. The timing of those conversations in the context of Kelly's cycle of experience is shown in Figure 3, together with the timing of the four repertory grids which were developed with each respondent in the course of the study.

Conversation 1

The initial meeting was designed to establish a rapport between a researcher and the two tourists. They were encouraged to engage in an autobiographical account of travel experiences with the researcher, which involved showing vacation memorabilia, such as photographs and souvenir objects. During the conversation, the researcher interspersed information about the study and the purposes of the research into the conversation. Nell reported that several younger members of the family were planning to visit Europe that summer, consequently travel to Europe was a regular conversation topic at family gatherings.

Nell was very interested in collecting photographs of her travels. She found it easy to recall the situation of a photograph. She frequently reported stories and constructions of events surrounding the taking of a photograph. On first glance at a photograph Fred seemed to report the content, whereas Nell reported a constructed meaning. The photographs seemed to extend the period of the vacation into other activities, i.e., the exchanging of photographs or letters with fellow travelers.

At the end of the session, holiday brochures depicting the U.K. were left with Fred and Nell who were requested to each choose six photographs for the Anticipations Grid. To these, they were asked to add two photographs taken from a previous tourist trip, that depicted themselves in a tourist role.

Conversation 2

The second conversation took place one week after the first and was entirely devoted to elicitation of the Anticipations Grid (Figure 4). The grid required approximately three hours to complete, including short breaks for refreshment. Each brochure photograph was assigned a numerical code (1-8) and presented to each respondent independently in nine triad and four dyad combinations (Figure 2). After elicitation of each construct, the pole names were entered on the data collection sheet, and Nell and Fred were asked to rate each photograph on a seven point scale.

After exhaustion of the possible combinations amongst the element groups, each respondent was consulted about inclusion of any constructs that had been discerned in the course of Conversation 1. With the agreement of
Figure 4. Flow of interactions between researcher, respondent, and repertory grid data and analysis.
the respondent, any such constructs were included on the data sheet and
the elements were rated against each construct in turn.

Their Anticipations Grids were subjected to the FOCUS program for
analysis (Figure 4). This uses a two-way cluster analytic technique to reorder
systematically the rows of constructs and columns of elements to produce a
focused grid showing the least variation between adjacent constructs and
adjacent elements. A researcher examined the grids' structures displayed in
the output in the light of the field notes obtained in Conversations 1 and 2.
The small set of personal constructs included within the Anticipations Grids
were assumed to reflect, in part, each respondent's anticipations of the vac-
cation. The congruence between Conversations 1 and 2 and the general
model can be seen in Figure 3.

Fred's Anticipations Grid contained eight constructs (Figure 5). The
content of the photographs chosen by Fred to be used as elements in his
Anticipations Grid seemed to reflect Fred's life interests. For example, Ele-
ment 1 (i.e., photograph 1) (E1) depicted several castle turrets within a land-
scape, E4 depicted a hill shepherd with his two working dogs, and E5 and
E6 depicted tourists in a countryside setting. The pole descriptors Coun-
tryside, Shepherd/Farmer, Countryside, and Pastoral seem, similarly, descriptive of
rural life (Figure 5A). To illustrate interpretation of the data in Figure 5A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ROYALTY</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
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<tr>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>ARISTOCRACY</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CITY</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENG TRADITIONAL</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PASTORAL SCENE</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENG HERITAGE</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REPRESENTS TOURIST</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOT ROYALTY

COUNTRYSIDE

SHEPHERD/FARMER

COUNTRYSIDE

ENG MODERN

SOCIAL SCENE

NOT ENG HERIT

DOES NOT REP TOURIST

SELF AS TOURIST

SELF AS TOURIST

TOURIST CULTURE

HOST CULTURE

LAND/CITY SCAPE

Figure 5A. Fred's anticipations grid. Raw data form.
consider the Royalty—Not Royalty construct dichotomy. Figure 5A shows that Fred scored photograph 1 (E1), which was an element in the Land/City scape category, (category names appear at the bottom of the figure), as a 3. This means it was perceived as being close to the mid-point of the 7 point scale, but located slightly towards the Royalty pole of the constraint.

The FOCUS output of Fred’s Anticipations Grid is shown in Figure 5B. The cluster analyses in FOCUS were designed to do two things. First, to look at the similarity between the way scores were allocated to all eight photographs on each construct. Thus, E3 scored a 2 and a 4 on Constructs 3 and 2, respectively, while E1 scored a 3 and 2, and E6 scored a 3 and 5 on these same two constructs. The tree structure on the right side of the grid incorporates a percentage scale showing the percentage match of the constructs.

C3 and C2 are shown as the most similar, while C1 and C5 are shown as the least similar. These results illustrate the second function of the FOCUS output, which is to provide a visual summary of the results. Thus, E1, E2, and E3 were classified in the Construct grid and the tree diagram, while E4, E5, E6, and E7 were not represented. Therefore, the tree diagram includes the constructs C1, C2, C3, and C4, but does not include C5 and C6.

These results indicate that E1, E2, and E3 perceived the urban landscape more similar to the Rural scene, while E4, E5, E6, and E7 perceived the urban landscape more similar to the City scene. The tree diagram also shows that E1, E2, and E3 perceived the Rural scene as more similar to the City scene, while E4, E5, E6, and E7 perceived the Rural scene as more similar to the Rural scene.

Nell’s Anticipations Grid chose three elements: Land/City scape, Social, and British People.

Figure 6A. Nell’s Anticipations Grid.
C3 and C2 are shown to be matched at point 9 in the tree at 71 percent. In contrast C5 and C6 were scored least similarly by Fred at 50 percent. The second function of the cluster analysis is to look at the scores given to the same photograph on all of the constructs and assess the similarity between photographs. Thus, Elements 6 and 7, for example, are scored 2 and 3 on Construct 5 and similarly closely on all of the constructs. The element tree at the top of Figure 5B shows these two elements match at 89 percent.

C7, C3, C2 and C4 form a cluster (on the right of Figure 5B) within the construct tree that represents a distinction between English Heritage, Aristocracy, Building and City, from Not English Heritage, Shepherd/Farmer, and Countryside (C2 and C4). A second cluster separates the descriptors Royalty, Does Not Represent Tourist, and Pastoral Scene from the descriptors Not Royalty, Represents Tourist, and Social Scene.

These two construct clusters are centered around the elements E3, E1, E6, E7 and E2 (at the top of Figure 5B) which tend towards a representation of the urban heritage aspects of Britain, and the elements E5, E8 and E4 which are stronger representations of rural/agricultural themes that Fred seems not to associate with Britain.

Nell’s Anticipations Grid contained seven constructs (Figure 6). She chose three elements in which the dominant content was of a plant/garden

Figure 5A shows that in the Land/City of the figure, as a 3, point of the 7 point constraint shown in Figure 5B, things. First, to look to all eight photograph in Constructs 3 and a 3 and 3 on these of the grid incorporation of the constructs.

Figure 6A. Nell’s anticipations grid. Raw data form
theme. E1 depicted an English cottage garden, E5 a flower decoration on a railway station in Scotland, and E8 a picture of herself in a lush tropical landscape.

Her construct tree shows three separate pairings of constructs (Figure 6B). The first, C4 and C5 matched at 70 percent, distinguish between City Life and City, and Not City Life and Country Scene. The second, C2 and C7, separates Typical English Landscapes and British People from Untypical English Landscapes and Tourists. Finally, C3 and C1 matched at 60 percent, contrast Social and Not Colorful/Lush Gardens with Not Social and Colorful/Lush Gardens.

Three element clusters E4, E2, E3 and E6 represent for Nell, notions of the social, city life-style that would be to her way of thinking, typically British. E7 and E8, both Self-as-tourist category elements, represent the contrasting view which seemed reflective of Nell's view of herself and her own rural lifestyle. E5 and E1, matched at the 66 percent level, are less definitely linked with either of the two construct clusters.

Conversations 3

Two weeks after Freet's session, the researcher engaged them in another hour. It focused on describing the Anticipations Grids. Each of them was required to focus on his/her own mind, to construct. Any doubts were discussed between researchers and the background established prior to the session that the constructs made up of the photographs (E1 to E8) would be independent of the other constructs before moving to the next session.

Reviewers of an experiment the grid analysis should be interested in a more interpretative manner and are invited to consult the original grids and the software from the PLA. The software includes a grid analysis of all the elements and the constructs together with the perspective grid analysis of the software and understanding of the constructs and the software which operationalises the constructs.

The computer on conversation 3 and 4. In summary, it is possible to see the limitations of the computer software, an interpretation which is closely associated with some less representative of the software. It seemed to hold a different process. The computer work, however, also meant that the computer software was more than the computer grids.
Conversation 3

Two weeks after Fred and Nell returned from their vacation, the researcher engaged them in the third conversation which took one and a half hours. It focussed on developing the Return Grids and getting feedback on the Anticipations Grids. They were provided with new data sheets that included the construct pole descriptors from the Anticipations Grid. Initially each of them was requested to read the list of pole descriptors and to clarify, in his/her own mind, the dimensions of thinking implied by the personal constructs. Any doubts over the meaning of the pole descriptors were discussed between researcher and respondents drawing upon the common ground established prior to the vacation. Once the respondents confirmed that the constructs made intuitive sense, they were requested to re-rate each of the photographs (Elements 1-8) against each of the constructs. They independently entered the scores for all photographs on a single construct before moving to the next construct (Figure 4).

Reviewers of an earlier draft of this article suggested that the detail of the grid analysis should be curtailed into a summary statement. Readers interested in a more intimate account of the conversations with Fred and Nell are invited to consult the original source (Botterill, 1988). The Anticipations and Return Grids were compared and analyzed using the MINUS and CORE software from the PLANET suite in order to detect construct change. MINUS subtracts equivalently positioned responses from two grids each with the same elements and constructs. The pattern of differences is printed out, together with the percentage difference between the two. CORE is an interactive program which enables a subject to investigate levels of agreement and understanding of responses on the Anticipations and Return Grids. The software successively determines the element which is seen least similarly, and the construct which is used least similarly, in both grids.

The computer output was used as vehicle for feedback in Conversations 3 and 4. In summary, the analyses indicated that Fred had revised his conceptions of modern British landscapes. In particular one of Fred’s chosen photographs, an image of castle turrets in the landscape became more closely associated with his constructions of modern British countryside and less representational of the stereotypical royal heritage images of Britain that it seemed to hold for Fred before his vacation. Nell’s grids suggested a rather different process. The vacation seemingly confirmed her anticipations and tightened her conceptions of English landscapes and lifestyle. The analysis also seemed to confirm her preferences for tourist experiences that provided pleasure from colorful flower gardens.

Conversation 4

This conversation consisted of a talk-back procedure which was a systematic attempt to involve Fred and Nell in an interpretation of their repertory grids:
During this ‘talk-back conversation’ they (the clients) are encouraged to systematically explore how their elements and their constructs relate one to another; and they are encouraged to seek personally satisfying explanations of this patterning of thoughts and feelings about the topic. (Thomas & Harri-Augstein, 1985, p. 77).

The researcher reported the results of the grid analyses to the respondents, starting with Fred and using the question, “the way you think about . . . has changed, can you account for it?” Changes to Fred’s constructs C7 and C8 were verified by Fred who requested that a construct be added relating to “culture”. Fred explained that his walking tour of Rochester and an informal meeting with a resident of Canterbury had made an impression upon him. This he expressed as amazement at the wealth of cultural information expounded by the guide in Rochester, even in a “fairly simple city”. He combined this experience with another in which he came to realize the importance of “the past” in the everyday life of modern Britain. Quite accidentally, Fred and Nell had met an ex-school mistress who lived in a disused school building in Canterbury. Her ability to recount the history of the building and the lives of some of its more famous occupants, impressed upon Fred the notion of history and culture in the popular tradition. In relation to E1, Fred also seemed satisfied that the movement of the photograph on the constructs could be attributed to the same shift in construction of heritage, tradition and modernity. Fred seemed less able to relate to the changes to C8 and C3, E7 and E5.

Nell had taken several photographs during her visits. The researcher commented on the things she liked. Nell said that the landscapes had changed. She stated, "you hear so much as you grow older", and that she was pretty much as I expected. The landscape itself was beautiful and the colors were vibrant. In her photographs, she had captured several times, as she had done in the past, the landscapes and the colors of the scene.

Fred also joined in the discussion about the different field photographs. He compared this aspect of an image to another and gleaned that not all his feelings were shared. From the view of the landscape, he could see very personal observation points which he constructed his same experience on.

Both respondents were happy to participate in the project. They agreed to include their photographs in the Recollections grid and were happy to share their experiences with the researcher. They both enjoyed the process of reflecting on their trips, depicted in E7 and E8, and were not surprised that the Adventure was a happy one.

Conversation 5

At the close of Group 5, six photographs were selected to satisfy the “universe of events” criterion. These photographs were to represent four other photographs depicting a particular aspect of their vacation. These six photographs, shown in the Recollections grid, were chosen by the respondents.

The content of each photograph was:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Photograph</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E1</td>
<td>Best moment of the trip</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E2</td>
<td>Fred by himself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E3</td>
<td>Three fellow tourists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E4</td>
<td>Nell with Scenic view</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E5</td>
<td>Inside a hotel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E6</td>
<td>Worst moment of the trip</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The PEGASUS Grid is an educational tool designed to elicit a grid of photographs and to then analyze the relationships between elements. The grid shown in Figure 7A, used as the template for this exercise, was designed to elicit a grid of photographs and to then analyze the relationships between elements. The grid shown in Figure 7A, used as the template for this exercise, was designed to elicit a grid of photographs and to then analyze the relationships between elements.
Nell had taken several photographs of gardens and landscapes. When the researcher commented on this, Nell responded that she photographed the things she liked. Nell seemed surprised that C2 relating to English landscapes had changed. She felt that she already knew about them before her visit, "you hear so much about them . . . we read about them . . . I think it was pretty much as I expected". Despite her statement, Nell commented several times, as she had done in Conversation 3, on the beauty of the landscapes and of the colors and scents of flowers in formal gardens.

Fred also joined in the conversation about landscapes. He commented about the different field patterns created by a unique system of walling, and compared this aspect of agricultural practice in Britain and in Australia. Fred agreed that not all his fellow tourists would have constructed such a meaning from the field of the landscape seen through the tour bus window. Fred's very personal observations of the influence of walling methods on field patterns in the landscape lends support to Kelly's central claim, that people can construe the same event differently.

Both respondents were asked about changes to their element category Self-as-tourist. Nell agreed that as a result of the visit to Britain her previous trips, depicted in E7 and E8, had taken on a slightly different meaning. She was not surprised that they had become more distinct from her British Isles Adventure because they were "different".

Conversation 5

At the close of Conversation 4 Fred and Nell were requested to select six photographs from those captured on this, their most recent, vacation. To satisfy the "universe of discourse" requirement (Shaw, 1980, p. 48), one photograph was to represent the best aspect of the vacation, and one, the worst. Four other photographs were selected to represent different aspects of the vacation. These six photographs comprised the initial set of elements used in the Recollections Grid. Each photograph was given an "element title", chosen by the respondent.

The content of each of his photographs was described by Fred as follows:

E1 Best moment, Family gathering in Whitstable.
E2 Fred by himself in Dover.
E3 Three fellow tourists outside a bar in Ireland.
E4 Nell with Stone Palace in background.
E5 Inside a hotel room in London, with the tour party.
E6 Worst moment, Picture of "folks in a line . . . pooped-out" after a day-long visit to Windsor.

The PEGASUS program provides a text instruction which enables the user to elicit a grid without involvement of a researcher. Fred's Recollections Grid is shown in its raw data form in Figure 7A. Upon completion of the Grid, the data were subject to a FOCUS analysis. The output, shown in Figure 7B, was used as the basis for a conversation with Fred.
Using the two groups of construct labels the researcher asked Fred if he could explain the distinction between Happy, Satisfaction, Exhilarating, Family and Worn out, Irritation, Historic, Friends. Fred agreed that, in a sense, these distinctions described the ways in which he recollected the events of his vacation, although he pointed out that the match between C1 and C4 with C2 was only partially true in that some Historic aspects were also satisfying. Fred said, “Some historic things are not irritating but they can make you worn-out”. Fred agreed that events with the family were, in general, happier and more satisfying than those with friends (C3).

The element structure was explored by laying out the photographs to mirror the pattern of the element tree. E4 and E5, matched at 90 percent, were representative of typical events in the vacation. That is, they were generally satisfying experiences, involving friends, and with an element of history. Fred agreed that E1 and E7 were both particularly “good experiences”. E2, the photograph of Fred alone in Dover did represent a rather different aspect of the vacation and Fred was not surprised to find that it did not match too highly with the other elements. Similarly, the separation of E6 representing the whole vacation as a whole was clear to Fred.

Finally, a researcher added to the Recollections Grid a structure that enabled meaningful, logical fit of the elements. Nell selected E1, E2, E3, E4, E5, E6. Nell added one element that described the elements in a way that was more meaningful and logical. Nell’s raw Recollections Grid showed that the constructs used by participants were not the same as those in the vacation. Fig. 7B, Past–Present, C4, C5, C6, is typical of how she represented the vacation.
representing the worst events of the vacation could easily be understood by Fred.

Finally, a researcher suggested that the construct pole descriptors in the Recollections Grid provided dimensions of thinking of a more personalized nature, and that the element structure seemed to present Fred with a meaningful, logical fit of actual events. Fred agreed with both points.

Nell selected the following photographs for her Recollections Grid:

E1 Best moment, The family at Whitstable.
E2 Woolen Mill and Castle at Blarney.
E3 Windsor Castle with aeroplane passing overhead.
E4 Self with relative in Canterbury.
E5 Fred sitting by himself in Dover.
E6 Worst moment, Aer Lingus jet on tarmac in New York.

Nell added one element:

E7 Sign and view of Windmill Restaurant.

Nell’s raw Recollections Grid is shown in Figure 8A.

In the process of feeding-back the data shown in Figure 8B, Nell agreed that the constructs elicited in the Recollections Grid were very different from those used to anticipate the vacation. She confirmed that the four constructs elicited did reflect some of the ways that she recalled events in the vacation. Particularly, she felt that the contrasts expressed in C1 Past–Present, C4 History–Modern, and C3 Bystanders–Part of Family were very typical of how she recollected this particular vacation.

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PAST</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLEASURABLE</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BYSTANDERS</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HISTORY</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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Figure 8A. Nell’s recollections grid. Raw data form
The elements she had chosen were laid out mimicking the structure of the element tree. It materialized that E4 and E7, matched at 87 percent, were photographed during the same visit to the family in Kent. According to Nell, E5 and E2 (matched at 75 percent) represented how events on the vacation were typically experienced; as bystanders viewing the past in pleasurable circumstances. Nell confirmed E3, E2, E4 and E7 were all somewhat similar parts of the tour that were clearly different from E1 and E5, photographs taken after the tour had finished. E6, the Aer Lingus jet, strongly represented Bystander, Present, Modern, and Boring.

Results of Formal Hypothesis Testing

Kelly's precise operational definition of experience makes it possible to assess whether each individual's vacation could be described as experience. This determination was made through the following set of hypotheses:

H.1. That the vacation event will not result in any overall constructive revision of the vacation elements and constructs.

H.2. That the relationships between the elements will not change as a result of the vacation.

H.3. That the relationships between the constructs will not change as a result of the vacation.

H.4. That the substitution by the respondents

The results of the form

H1. deals with the

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and after the vacation.

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vacation.

The analysis of changes in the element structures processed by the computer program data in this way enables elements to be assessed.

H.2. tested the changes to constructs in his four construct change.

H.3. tested changes in the City scape category of the element, and two Se

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Nell, she confirmed conscious of what he and two cases the study

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Kelly himself should

primarily concerned

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H.4. That the substitution of elements by photographs taken on the vacation by the respondent will not result in any new construct elicitation.

The results of the formal testing of hypotheses are shown in Table 1. H1. deals with the notion of experience change in its entirety. Analysis of the Anticipations and Return Grids indicated that both respondents registered a difference between the scoring of the brochure photographs before and after the vacation. However, only Fred confirmed the findings by agreeing that his construct system had changed as a result of the events of the vacation.

The analysis of change was further examined through the construct and element structures produced when repertory grids were subject to analysis by the computer programs contained within the PLANET suite. Treating the data in this way enabled changes to individual constructs and to individual elements to be assessed.

H.2. tested the construct change. Nell was unable to confirm any of the changes to constructs identified through analysis, but Fred confirmed two of his four construct changes.

H.3. tested changes to elements. Fred confirmed change to one Land/City scape category element. Nell confirmed change to one Land/City scape element, and two Self-as-tourist elements.

In the case of H.4., both Fred and Nell agreed that the constructs used in recollecting the vacation could be described as new constructs.

Concluding Comments

The study was intended to make a contribution to the understanding of contemporary leisure and tourism experiences from the perspective of individual tourists. It was an attempt to understand the experience as he or she might describe or explain it to him or her self. By the adoption of a Kellian approach, that understanding is achieved by reference to personal construct psychology. From the outside, Fred and Nell must have been seen by thousands of Britains as archetypal American tourists on the same package tour of Britain, but from the inside, Kelly's psychology has allowed a glimpse into each of the respondents’ many idiosyncratic ways of seeing. Thus, for Fred, the trip became a comparative observation of landscape and agricultural practices and a reassessment of heritage and modern Britain, while for Nell, she confirmed her preferred constructions of Britain and became more conscious of what she enjoyed about her self in a tourist role. Through these two cases the study has, therefore, demonstrated a quite different articulation of experience from that contained in the Clawson and Knetsch (1966) model.

In this final section, the authors explore the implications of adopting a Kellian conceptualization of experience, and consequently the tenets and practices of PCT, for future leisure and tourism behavior research agendas. Kelly himself showed no interest in leisure during his career. He was primarily concerned with promoting change and development in clients who were experiencing emotional and behavioral problems.
null
The word "vacation" as it is commonly used has connotations of vacating the space in which an individual spends most of his or her everyday existence. The Kellian approach to vacationing offers an alternative view. The implication of a model of the fully optimizing tourist includes the vacation of space and the constructions of that space. The current understanding of the process of going on a pleasure trip does not include the possibility of vacating one's psychological space. That is not to say that the tourist does not carry any construction with him or her, but that these are found to be useful or inadequate in relation to the constraining of events in the new physical space at the vacation destination. Enabling tourists to understand the sometimes disturbing process of re-construing might well be an important skill for tourism intermediaries such as tour guides and travel writers. The optimizing tourist experiences not only a vacation of space, but also a vacation from previous constructions—an enlivened tourist on a true vacation.

Constructs are not specifically created to deal with a pleasure trip. They may well become more or less useful on such a trip, but they are essentially in use by individuals throughout their everyday existence. In this way, the vacation is returned to its place within the life of the person and is not separated out as some eccentric, temporary and rather meaningless event. By the same notion, the way a person approaches a pleasure trip may well be set by the way the individual approaches life. Thus a study of a person's approach to being a tourist can be illustrative of wider concerns, as the data of the conversations in the study seem to substantiate (see also Botterill, 1989).

A research stance that foregrounds optimization as a goal both in the life course and on vacation, needs to be exercised with caution. Kelly's clients had voluntarily sought help in order to achieve developmental change, whereas individuals may or may not be seeking some level of personal development on their vacations. Each individual may wish to place limits upon optimization and these must be acknowledged by the researcher. Furthermore, careful attention to the power relations operating in PCT research, wherein construct revision is taken as valid by the researcher only if the respondent is able to confirm it, squarely locates the control of the process of optimization with the respondent. This would seem to suggest that future studies utilizing a Kellian approach would be best applied to pleasure trips in which the pursuit of personal development, perhaps through adventure, challenge and exposure to the extraordinary, are explicit motivations of the respondents. However, a danger in favoring such a limited application of PCT is that it seems predicated on a separation between the adventure traveler who is open to optimization and the mass tourist who is not. As this study has shown, Fred and Nell were package tourists, but to varying degrees each was involved in the psychological process of reconstruing. A pattern in the authors' work suggests that all tourists may be capable of quite intense anticipations that appeared to invite exposure to the 'other' world of the vacation destination and the possibility of reconstruing. In another case, the inability of a tourist named Dick to deal with the disconfirmation of his
personal constructions of Britain while on tour led to considerable dissatisfaction with the vacation, and seemingly influenced his reported likely future vacationing behavior not to travel outside the US (Botterill 1988). This leads the authors to envisage that a further application of PCT in tourism research would be to consider how satisfaction and dissatisfaction might be conceptualized from a Kellian perspective.

The case studies reported here tended to emphasize the cognitive aspects of construing. In building towards a clearer understanding of tourists’ experiences the authors would like to suggest a new starting point for future PCT enquiries. The model in Figure 3 depicts the process of construing as being associated with emotional states. In a Kellian study of optimization, emotions would have a much more positive function in helping to identify construct change. We suggest, therefore, that leisure and tourism researchers might usefully look first at the writing on emotion by PCT scholars such as Preston and Viney (1986) and Rigdon and Epton (1988). For example, disconfirmation is associated with threat, fear, anxiety and guilt. If, therefore, leisure and tourism researchers are interested in optimizing experience it might look more closely at emotional states as primary data.

Emotional discourse is almost entirely missing from the tourism literature on behavior (Ryan, 1994) except in studies of complaint behavior where emotions are seen as dysfunctional in service quality models. Within an emotional discourse of the vacation it would be expected to find, for example, consideration of ‘separation’ from home and ‘attachment’ to the destination, of ‘identification’ with hosts, of ‘intimacy’ and ‘exclusion’ from new cultures.

The importance of the emotions associated with attachment, identity, intimacy, rejection and separation in understanding human development is well recognized by researchers in many areas of the life course. That negative associations are carried by some emotions, e.g. anxiety and fear, should not preclude them being seen as integral parts of the fully optimizing tourist. As Dick’s case hinted, such negative feelings would seem to have an important influence on some aspects of tourist satisfaction (Botterill 1988).

References


