

CONSTRUCT, IMAGE, AND PREDICTION – A VIEW OF HARDY’S *JUDE THE OBSCURE* THROUGH GEORGE KELLY’S PSYCHOLOGY OF PERSONAL CONSTRUCTS

Cintra Whitehead

Ocala, Florida, USA

If someone were to ask me to choose one novel which illustrates most clearly George Kelly’s theory of personal constructs, I could do no better, I think, than select Thomas Hardy’s *Jude the Obscure*. Just as Freud found in Wilhelm Jensen’s *Gradiva* an expression in fiction of his theoretical ideas (Freud, 1956 [1906]), George Kelly might find in Hardy’s novel an articulation of his theory, all the more remarkable in that the first edition of *Jude* anticipated Kelly’s *Psychology of Personal Constructs* by more than half a century.¹

In order to clarify the correspondences between Hardy’s art and Kelly’s psychology, let me begin with a very brief recapitulation of the most relevant points in Kelly’s theory for the benefit of those who have a limited acquaintanceship with it, and then go on to the parallels in Hardy’s novel.

Kelly has been called a cognitive theorist, but he himself rejected that label. He did not believe that the human being could be divided into body vs. mind/soul, and the mind/soul further subdivided into the three parts classically called cognition, emotion, and conation. For Kelly the person is a whole person, and the epithet which Kelly uses to describe the whole person is “man-the-scientist” (Kelly, 1955, 1:4). Kelly meant of course man-the-species including both female and male. For George Kelly scientific thought,

crystallized in its modern systematic form, is simply a formalization of the way ordinary people really think. Humans construe their universe; they organize their constructions into theories, derive hypotheses and make predictions based upon them; they test these hypotheses, revise them and their theories, and retest. The core characteristic of each human being, then, is – like the goal of the scientist – to predict and control events. Or as Kelly stated it in his Fundamental Postulate, “A person’s processes are psychologically channelized by the way in which he anticipates events” (Kelly, 1955, 1:46). Humans can never, Kelly believes, apprehend reality with one hundred percent accuracy. Like their formal twentieth-century scientific counterparts in laboratory or field, people throughout the centuries have had to be satisfied with probability, i.e., with approximations of reality. They apprehend reality through their constructs and the closer their constructs match reality the more accurate will their predictions be.

It is important at this time to underscore what Kelly means by the word *construct*. Kelly defines *construct* quite clearly: “In its minimum context a construct is a way in which at least two elements are similar and contrast with a third. There must be at least three elements in the context. There may, of course, be more” (Kelly, 1955, 1:61). A construct, then, is a way of viewing (construing) an event, thing, or person which depends on the construer’s discrimination of two relationships (one of similarity and one of difference) out of a context of at least three things, constructs thus are always two-ended, though the ends certainly need not be expressed as dictionary antonyms. On these constructs – constructions of reality – men and women base their predictions and their attempts to control events.

Constructs may be verbal so that both ends of

¹ “Thomas Hardy (1840 – 1928) was an English novelist and poet. A Victorian realist in the tradition of George Eliot, he was influenced both in his novels and in his poetry by Romanticism, especially William Wordsworth. Charles Dickens was another important influence. Like Dickens, he was highly critical of much in Victorian society, though Hardy focused more on a declining rural society.” (*Wikipedia*) (Eds.)

the construct are expressed in language, although one end may be suspended or submerged (i.e., not articulated for one reason or another at a given time). If this were all there were to Kelly’s theory of personal constructs, we might be justified in calling him a cognitive theorist, but his theory is much richer than any purely cognitive theory, for he believes that, besides the constructs that can be completely or partially verbalized, each person develops nonverbal and preverbal constructs on which he predicates his actions – i.e., predicts or makes bets on life.

Nonverbal constructs are primarily resident in the realm we usually call *physiological*; we are seldom aware of them, and very little research has been devoted to understanding them. We can speculate that some of them, at least, may operate on the basis of biochemistry, and in regard to other species we are able to concede that perhaps trees, for instance, do construe certain insects as dangerous and predict attack, even warn others of their own species through a biochemical transmission of information, so that they can prepare certain biochemical defenses. Many people are unconvinced that similar situations occur at the organ or biochemical level among humans, but out of Kelly’s theory there comes the hypothesis that these nonverbal constructs are the body’s – or certain organ’s – way of construing reality. Although we can talk *about* these constructs they can never be directly verbalized; they may perhaps be represented in imagery and the image then verbalized. Doctors and nurses no doubt hear a good deal of what people are able to say about nonverbal constructs when patients try to explain certain physical sensations through similes or metaphors. “My stomach was tied in a knot”; “It felt like I had spider webs over my eyes,” they will say; or “It was as if a light were on inside my head and I couldn’t turn it off.” Descriptions of this kind – often dismissed as simply bizarre – might be taken more seriously if they were seen as attempts to express nonverbal constructs.

Preverbal constructs, on the other hand, are clearly in the realm we designate as *psychological*, especially in what we have come to call the *unconscious* or *subconscious*. Preverbal constructs may at some time become verbal, but in their preverbal state they are often visual images,

hunches, feelings. Perhaps we come closest to understanding them in dreams. We have all had the experience of having a dream which seems vivid and meaningful but which recedes when we wake and try to talk about it. Somehow, when we try to verbalize what happened in that dream, it all eludes us. We are dealing, then, with preverbal constructs. We often base our predictions and our attempts to control on these preverbal, imagistic, emotional constructs which enter our dreams and our daydreams; but, because they are so vague and perhaps ephemeral, our predictions which we base on them often come to nothing, though occasionally they are surprisingly accurate and then give us an eerie sense of prescience. If we are fairly often right, we say that we come to trust our intuition or our gut. When our preverbal constructs, expressed in dreams or in other ways, do not pan out, we have a sense of not understanding why we do what we do, and we often rattle back and forth in the slot or groove between the two ends of a verbal or nonverbal construct simply because we are unable to rise to a higher level construct, and cannot construe accurately enough to see alternative courses of action.

Of course when we fail to predict accurately, and when our control of our life-situation fails because of our failed predictions, we become anxiety stricken. The source of the neuroses, then, in the Kellyan system lies in a poorly developed and inadequately structured construct system which fails to allow the person to construe accurately and thus predict and control to a tolerable extent. The human condition depends on the human’s use of construct and prediction. I will let Kelly say it:

Because he can represent his environment, he can place alternative constructions upon it and, indeed, do something about it if it doesn’t suit him. To the living creature, then, the universe is real, but it is not inexorable unless he chooses to construe it that way.

(Kelly, 1955, 1:8)

No one needs to paint himself into a corner; no one needs to be completely hemmed in by circumstances; no one needs to be the victim of his biography. We call this philosophical position

constructive alternativism.

(Kelly, 1955, 1:15)

... man can enslave himself with his own ideas and then win his freedom again by reconstruing his life.

(Kelly, 1955, 1:21)

And thus we come to *Jude the Obscure*, for Hardy shows us in Jude a man of promise who clearly might do otherwise, but who chooses to paint himself into a corner; who does allow himself to be hemmed in by circumstances; who does accept the idea of being the victim of his own biography; a man who, despite his gifts, fails to construe accurately and who deliberately averts his eyes from reality, preferring images to reality; a man who therefore is fated to rattle back and forth in the grooves of his few imagistic constructs, manipulated by others who can construe him more accurately than he construes himself.

Before beginning the discussion of *Jude*, however, I want to review Kelly's Fundamental Postulate and state three of the eleven corollaries to it. All eleven of the corollaries are relevant and find parallels in the novel, but these three are so compelling in relation to *Jude* that I feel I must state them.

- The *Fundamental Postulate* says that "A person's processes are psychologically channeled by the ways in which he anticipates events".
- The *Choice Corollary* states that "A person chooses for himself that alternative in a dichotomized construct through which he anticipates the greater possibility for extension and definition of his system."
- The *Experience Corollary* states that "A person's construction system varies as he successively construes the replication of events."
- The *Sociality Corollary* states that "To the extent that one person construes the construction process of another, he may play a role in a social process involving the other person."

(*Summary of Assumptive System*,
Kelly, 1955, 1:103-04).

Kelly points out in his discussion of this corol-

lary that "One person may understand another better than he is understood" (Kelly 1955, 1:96), and we will see that this is true of Jude, particularly in his relationship with Arabella who understands him better than he understands her – or himself – and thus allows himself to be manipulated and controlled by her.

Although constructs, images, and predictions congruent with Kelly's theory abound on every page of Hardy's novel, I must limit myself to a few of the most important. When we meet Jude at the age of eleven, he is in the process of absorbing (as we all do in childhood) constructs from his elders. From Mr. Phillotson, the schoolmaster who is leaving Marygreen to go to Christminster to seek his academic fortune [*Choice Corollary*] Jude learns to construe a university education and a life of scholarship as the "hallmark" of success; he learns that Christminster is "headquarters" for this way of life; he accepts Mr. Phillotson's farewell clichés ("I shan't forget you, Jude," "be kind to animals and birds, and read all you can," [I.1.10])² as universal truths which he must integrate into his construct system as best he can. Out of these constructs which he has gained from Mr. Phillotson he develops a system which opposes an idealized Christminster to the real Marygreen which he associates with the ugliness of the field where he labors for a farmer by scaring the rooks from the grain [*Choice and Experience Corollaries*].

When he practices the "be kind to animals and birds" precept given him by Mr. Phillotson and allows the rooks to feed on the grain, he finds himself in conflict and in disgrace with the farmer whose construct system differs significantly from that of Mr. Phillotson and who therefore has no sympathy to waste on the birds or on Jude.

A little later Jude forms a construct which opposes his homely rural labors – first as a baker and deliveryman for his aunt's bakeshop and then as apprentice stonemason – to a career of exalted scholarship in Christminster.

Unable to construe Christminster except

² All references to *Jude the Obscure* are to the Norton Critical Edition. The numbers in brackets refer to Part, Section, and page number.

through his imagination, since he has no first hand experience, Jude tries to “see” it more clearly. From a vantage point near the village where he climbs to the top of the Brown House he prays (prayer is a kind of prediction and control) for the mists to clear so that he can catch a glimpse of Christminster which lies twenty miles away across the fields. The prayer is answered; the mists clear and Jude sees the sunset glinting on the roofs and windows of the great city – or perhaps, Hardy says, he sees a mirage. As the sun goes down and the landscape darkens, Jude climbs down from the roof where he has achieved his first view of Christminster and begins his long walk home. In his actual physical journey between this geographical location where he has had his first real glimpse of Christminster and the village where he lives with his aunt, Jude establishes the pattern of action based on his newly reinforced preverbal imagistic construct which is to govern many of his moves in later life. At this point, one pole of this construct is his vision of a vague Christminster veiled in mist, the other pole is his home – or such home as he now knows – in the village where “... he was glad to see the lights in the cottage windows, even though this was not the home of his birth, and his great-aunt did not care much about him” (I.3.19).

Hardy describes the development of the Christminster pole of the construct in this way: “... the City acquired a tangibility, a permanence, and a hold on his life ...” (I.3.20). Jude has developed another partly verbal, partly preverbal construct concerning the schoolmaster Phillotson which is subordinate to the *Christminster vs. Marygreen* construct. Hardy tells us that the city has gained such a hold on Jude’s life, “... mainly from the one nucleus of fact that the man for whose knowledge and purposes he had so much reverence was actually living there, not only so, but living among the more thoughtful and mentally shining ones therein” (I.3.20).

Weeks or perhaps months later Jude returns to the Brown House, hoping to see from that vantage point the night lights of Christminster. He sees no individual light but only a “... halo or glow-fog over-arching the place...” Mr. Phillotson remains strongly associated with Christminster in Jude’s mind, so that, Hardy tells

us, “He set himself to wonder on the exact point in the glow where the schoolmaster might be – he who never communicated with anybody at Marygreen now” (I.3.20). Jude now seems to set up an imagistic construct concerning Phillotson, who is (at one pole of that construct) “as if dead” to the villagers, but who (at the opposite pole of the construct) is alive to Jude who imagines some mystical communication from him and now seems to see him against the glow of Christminster, “... promenading at ease, like one of the forms in Nebuchadnezzar’s furnace” (I.3.20).

Kelly theorized that preverbal constructs are developed most often (but not always) around dependency needs. These constructs are preverbal precisely because they are often developed by the young child before he or she has language to represent the complex events that must be construed. Kelly warns his students that:

One should not expect his adult client to describe or portray a preverbal construct in a manner which is becoming to a mature person. The therapist has before him an infant who is speaking with the voice of an adult. The infant’s thinking may be overlaid with the sophistication of adulthood; but as the overlay is thrown back, the wide-eyed, vaguely comprehending, dereistic child is revealed.

(Kelly, 1955, I: 461)

We see Thomas Hardy, in this scene of Jude’s second vision of Christminster, exploring the development of the young Jude’s preverbal imagistic constructs which he is building around Christminster and Mr. Phillotson, who is the only adult male model the boy has. In his need for a father, a protector, a mentor, and a guide, it is no wonder that Jude turns to his fantasy of the departed schoolmaster as the one who will initiate him into the fellowship of scholars and the society of Christminster.

The mystical communication which Jude imagines blown on the wind from Mr. Phillotson and Christminster itself is interrupted by a carter and his crew who are hauling coals along the road. Jude questions the carter about Christminster. He has not come from that city with his coals this day, he tells Jude, but that

does not keep him from offering Jude his own carter's constructs about the city of learning. The carter's constructs are no more realistic than Jude's own, though a bit more concrete. He tells him that it takes them "... five years to turn a lirrumping hobble-de-hoy chap into a solemn preaching man with no corrupt passions"; he says, "... there's beautiful music everywhere," and finally that "... there's a street in the place – the main street – that h'an't another like it in the world." Before they part company the carter admits to Jude that he has never been to Christminster, but what he has said has come from the good authority of a friend who lived there and cleaned boots at the hotel. Jude does not question the authenticity of what he has heard, and joining to the vision of the halo the carter's constructs – which Hardy allows the reader to construe as clearly unreliable – "He suddenly grew older." He had found "... something to anchor on." And in his ecstasy he recites a litany of praise to Christminster: "... city of light ... tree of knowledge ... place that teachers of men spring from and go to ... castle manned by scholarship and religion." And Hardy lets him end, as George Kelly would expect him to do, with a prediction, "It would just suit me." (I.3.20-22).

But it will be some time before Jude has an opportunity to put his prediction to the test, for, although the image of the halo which defines Christminster for Jude becomes the controlling and motivating construct in his life, before he can take himself to that haloed city of learning he happens upon Arabella.

Jude has no constructs through which to construe Arabella or make predictions about her. His Aunt Drusilla has always said that Fawleys should never marry, and Jude has been content to submerge himself in his dreams of Christminster. But Arabella, though her construct system is shallow and limited, construes concretely and accurately in the areas she chooses. With the help of girl friends she construes the reality of Jude accurately enough. He is, as Arabella's shrewd girl friend-advisor convinces her, "A countryman that's honorable and serious-minded ..." (the opposite pole of that construct is clearly verbalized for Arabella: "God forbid that I should say a sojer, or a sailor, or commercial

gent ... or any of them that be slippery with poor women!") Most importantly, Arabella allows herself to be convinced that "... he's to be had, and as a husband" (I.7.42-43) [*Sociality Corollary*].

Arabella, after some coaching from her girl friends, predicts on the basis of these constructs that sexual seduction and her real or imagined pregnancy will precipitate Jude into marriage. Her first attempt at seducing Jude fails; she plans the second attempt more carefully [*Experience Corollary*], sending her parents away so that she and Jude are alone in the house. And, although she herself does not indulge in imagistic construing, she knows how to use imagery. The Cochin's egg which she warms at her breast because "... it is natural for a woman to want to bring live things into the world" (I.8.47) is a persuasive symbolic and imagistic element in accomplishing her seduction of Jude [*Sociality Corollary*].

Jude, in response to Arabella's aggressive campaign to marry him, now forms another construct which has at one pole Arabella and a sort of abstract love-of-woman and at the other his studies and his career in Christminster. "It was better to love a woman than to be a graduate, or a parson; ay, or a pope!" (I.7.41) [*Choice Corollary*]. But Jude bases his opinion on an unrealistic and idealized view of Arabella, for as Hardy tells us, "He knew well, too well, in the secret center of his brain that Arabella was not worth a great deal as a specimen of womankind ... For his own soothing he kept up a factitious belief in her. His idea of her was the thing of most consequence, not Arabella herself, he sometimes said laconically" (I.9.48). As George Kelly said, "Man can enslave himself with his own ideas ..." (Kelly, 1955, 1:21).

When the marriage with Arabella breaks up and Arabella goes to Australia with her family, Jude rattles to the other end of his construct and prepares to go to Christminster hoping to become a graduate or a parson. Once there, he again confronts reality obliquely, for just as he did with Arabella, "When he passed objects out of harmony with its (Christminster's) general expression, he allowed his eyes to slip over them as if he did not see them" (II.1.64). Then Jude closes his eyes to imperfections and continues to

idealize the city, construing it still in terms of visions and halos.

Hardy’s building of Jude’s construct system has been from the beginning detailed, subtle, and complex. Once he has placed Jude in Christminster, he skillfully begins to develop the construct system through which Jude construes the city. He does this by opposing Jude’s desire to be a scholar to his need to work in order to support himself: “... the mean bread and cheese question ...” as Hardy calls it (II.2.68). Hardy uses imagery to extend Jude’s construing of Christminster and the reader’s construing of Jude in Christminster. As Jude wanders the city at night, he feels a sort of mystical kinship – even imagines a dialogue – with the past and present scholars of the university. And with darkness obscuring the weathered condition of the stone, he admires the turrets and pinnacles of the ancient buildings. In the morning light, as Jude sets out to look for work, he construes Christminster quite differently. Hardy tells us that he found that the colleges had treacherously changed their sympathetic countenances: some were pompous; some had put on the look of family vaults above ground; something barbaric loomed in the masonries of all” (II.2.68). And Jude now construes the buildings through the constructs of a stonemason rather than those of a would-be scholar – as an “artizan” rather than as an “artisticritic.” He touches the buildings, strokes them, “... as one who knew their beginning, said they were difficult or easy in the working, had taken little or much time, were trying to the arm or convenient to the tool ... What at night had been perfect and ideal was by day the more or less defective real” (II.2.68). The “day” constructs that flood into Jude’s head and govern his view of the ancient architecture derive from an imagistic personification of the buildings: they have been insulted, they are “... wounded, broken, sloughing off their outer shape in the deadly struggle against years, weather, and man” (II.2.68). Jude as stonemason, we realize, construes himself as the buildings’ physician, just as, at the “night” pole of that construct, he construes himself as having the potential to become a scholar-theologian and a physician of souls.

In the workyard where he arrives to seek work, he sees the reality of the “day” pole of his

construct regarding the buildings (*wounded, broken*), for here the new replacement elements are “... marked by precision, mathematical straightness, smoothness, exactitude: there in the old walls were the broken lines of the original idea” (II.2.69).

And at this point Hardy describes with exactitude Jude’s epiphany of construing:

For a moment there fell on Jude a true illumination; that here in the stone yard was a centre of effort as worthy as that dignified by the name of scholarly study within the noblest of the colleges. But he lost it under stress of his old idea. He would accept any employment which might be offered him on the strength of his late employer’s recommendation; but he would accept it as a provisional thing only. This was his form of the modern vice of unrest.

(II.2.69)

No psychologist has ever more clearly understood or more accurately described the switch from one pole of a construct to the other than Hardy does in this brief but crucial passage.

Jude’s form of unrest, from this point on, is seen in his rattling back and forth between the two poles of that construct he holds of himself – on one hand the artisan, on the other the scholar. Failing to find work as a stonemason at once, Jude spends his time haunting the cloisters of the colleges and finally confronts his real separation from the scholars inside. The symbol of the separation which finally brings the reality home to him, if only briefly, is the physical wall which surrounds the cloister. “Only a wall divided him from those happy young contemporaries of his with whom he shared a common mental life ... Only a wall – but what a wall!” (II.2.70). And as a stonemason Jude himself is a builder of such walls, literally as well as figuratively. It is the fact that Jude is construed by *others* as a common tradesman – a stonemason that keeps them from construing him as a scholar. Jude must work at the only skill he knows in order to live, but the more he works at his trade – the more walls he builds – the more he walls himself off from the possibility of being construed by others as a scholar. Jude is now doomed to slide back and forth between his view of himself as rustic

tradesman and as potential cosmopolitan academician, and his psychological alternations between these two poles will be accompanied by job-related moves of lodgings from Christminster when he is at the *self-as-scholar* pole of the construct to one of the out-lying trade-oriented towns when he shifts to the *tradesman/stonemason* pole.

We should remember at this point that Hardy has created Jude with an imagistic construct system, and that the images have a great deal to do with geographical location. Just after his marriage to Arabella has broken up, and just before he decides to leave Alfredston to go to Christminster, we see him strolling along the road "... toward the upland whereon had been experienced the chief emotions of his life." Near the point where he had first seen the halo of light that signified Christminster – as he has learned from his aunt – is the spot where his father and mother quarrelled and parted, and on a milestone is the message he had carved on the first day of his apprenticeship: the word, "THITHER" followed by the Initials, "J.F." Hardy emphasized Jude's geographically imagistic construing (no doubt based on his own) by printing the map of "Wessex" at the front of the novel. Given Jude's (and Hardy's) tendency to image in geographical terms, we can expect to see physical spatial moves accompany his psychological shift from one pole to the other of his superordinate construct every time he again loses his view of himself as stonemason or as scholar.

But Jude (as well as the reader) has now become aware of Jude's cousin Sue. When Jude sees a photograph of her at their Aunt Drusilla's cottage he sees "a pretty girlish face in a broad hat with radiating folds under the brim like the rays of a halo" (II. 1.78). And, since Sue is in Christminster, the image of the halo envelopes both Sue and Christminster, and in fact it is the haloed image of Sue who lives in haloed Christminster which provides the final impetus to send Jude to Christminster [*Choice Corollary*].

We see far fewer details of Sue's construct system than of Jude's, but those we do see are telling. Her major constructs seem to be *Christian vs. Pagan*, *imprisonment/constriction vs. freedom*, and *marriage by contract vs. free and*

real love.

Imagery is just as important in Sue's style of construing reality as in Jude's. Our first real acquaintance with her establishes her penchant for imagistic preverbal construing. On her afternoon off Sue walks out into the countryside and comes upon a vendor crying his wares. His cry is in fact, "I-i-i-mages!" He is selling statuettes of mythological figures. Sue, who works in an ecclesiastical art store and lives much like a nun in a celibate small chamber under the watchful eye of her employer/landlady, buys two figurines – one of Venus and one of Apollo. "Well, anything," she says to herself, "is better than those everlasting church fal-lals!" (II.3.76-77) [*Choice Corollary*]. Here in visual imagery is expressed for the reader and for Sue her construct *Christian vs. Pagan* and her rebellion against Christian strictures. Jude shares the construct, but he presently resides at the more conventional *Christian* end of it.

We have not time to follow the vicissitudes of Jude and Sue's love story and their moves that take them to the various places where Jude plys his trade. Sue traps herself in a marriage to Jude's old schoolmaster, Mr. Phillotson [*Choice Corollary*], whom Jude has insisted on their visiting. Phillotson does not remember Jude as he promised he always would and when Jude sees the careworn man who has not accomplished what he wanted to accomplish in Christminster, "the halo which had surrounded the schoolmaster's figure in Jude's imagination ever since their parting" (II.4.83)¹ is destroyed. Along with the halo goes Jude's preverbal construing of Mr. Phillotson as father/mentor/sponsor. In fact Phillotson's patronage, so long denied to Jude, now is bestowed upon Sue. Sue's decision to marry Phillotson seems to be an expression of what Kelly was to call the "elaborative choice," since, as she explains to Jude, she will go to teacher's training school, gain a certificate, and be ready to join Phillotson in opening a girls' school (III.1.107) [*Choice Corollary*]. It might truly be an elaborative choice if it were not for Sue's constructs *imprisonment vs. freedom* and *marriage by contract vs. real love*. As Hardy has allowed his readers to see, however, the marriage to Phillotson can be nothing but a snare. And Jude, too, remains trapped in his marriage to

Arabella, although she is in Australia.

In the second half of the novel the snare or trap which represents both marriage and Jude’s more general entrapment in his status as rural craftsman usurps the place of the halo as the major image in Jude and Sue’s lives. Images of death and snares are everywhere. It is the death of their aunt that brings Jude and Sue together after her marriage to Phillotson and allows them the opportunity to decide to defy custom and live together. The principle image of death and entrapment arises from an incident which takes place on the night of the funeral. When Jude tries to fall asleep in his old room in his aunt’s cottage he hears the piteous cry of a rabbit caught in a snare. Its cry is so anguished and agonizing that Jude goes out to kill the rabbit to stop its suffering. Sue, staying with Mrs. Edlin across the street, hears it too. The meeting that night and the more important incident next day which lead to the union of Jude and Sue are thus overshadowed by images of death and entrapment [*Choice and Experience Corollaries*].

Just as Jude is entrapped in his *exalted scholar vs. humble stonemason* construct, Sue is caught in her *freedom vs. imprisonment / constriction* and her *true love vs. marriage by contract* constructs. We could counsel Jude and Sue, if they were real people and not characters in a novel, to arrange their domestic relationships more sensibly. Sue and Jude could divorce their unwanted spouses and could marry each other. It is not so much that Hardy paints them as free spirits who see themselves above the need for contractual marriage, but rather as confused people, trapped in their unrealistic views of marriage. Sue in particular seems to be afraid of the word *marriage*. No doubt Aunt Drusilla’s anti-marriage propaganda has influenced her, and the unhappy stories of both her parents and Jude’s parents play a part in her reluctance to marry Jude, although she is willing to live with him, but primarily Hardy gives us a portrait of a woman who has a superstitious view of the power of words. He creates a Sue who never realizes that what is dangerous to her and Jude is not the ceremony of marriage or the word *marriage*, but the relationships that constitute marriage: man-to-woman, woman-to-man, parent-to-child, child-to-parent, child-to-child.

When Little Father Time who is Jude’s son by his marriage to Arabella arrives from Australia to live with Jude and Sue, the images of death multiply. The reader, informed by these images, begins to predict catastrophe on the basis of preverbal constructs derived from a mood of brooding mortality. For instance, little Time himself is aged and somber in appearance and his nickname reminds us that Father Time and The Grim Reaper are companion images. But the most telling image comes in the scene at the Agricultural Fair to which Jude and Sue take Little Time. They try to entertain and cheer him, but he remains sad. Sue, overcome by the beauty of the roses on display buries her face in the flowers. Little Time apologizes for remaining sad but says, “I should like the flowers very very much, if I didn’t keep on thinking they’d be all withered in a few days” (V.5.235). Jude, so sensitive to his own images, fails to take warning and fails to understand his son’s construing of his world, and, unrealistic as ever, he thinks of sending Little Time to the university one day to accomplish what Jude has not been able to accomplish.

At times Jude recognizes the futility of trying to become a scholar or a churchman and gives up all hope of Christminster; at other times his vision returns. The changes – rattling back and forth in the grooves of his few imagistic constructs – are symbolized geographically by the moves from Christminster to one of the less academically oriented more commercial towns where Jude practices his stonemasonry [*Choice and Experience Corollaries*]. Nowhere is Jude’s quandary so clearly presented in imagery as when, ill and out of work in Kennetbridge, he turns to designing and making Christminster cakes which Sue and Little Time sell on the street. In these cakes, which are cut, frosted, and decorated to resemble the buildings of Christminster with their windows, towers, and pinnacles, are united the images of the young Jude as baker in his aunt’s shop, Jude as stonemason, and Jude as dreamer and would-be scholar, possessing in the only way he can – in gingerbread – his vision of Christminster [*Choice and Experience Corollaries*]. Arabella, who has returned to England, sees Sue and Little Time selling the cakes on the street. She says to Sue, “Just like Jude. A ruling passion. What a

queer fellow he is, and always will be!” Symbolically she takes one of the cakes and eats it without paying for it. Sue replies:

“Of course Christminster is a sort of fixed vision with him, which I suppose he’ll never be cured of believing in. He still thinks it a great center of high and fearless thought, instead of what it is, a nest of commonplace schoolmasters whose characteristic is timid obsequiousness to tradition.”

(V.7.247-48)

When Jude becomes well enough to work again he insists that he and Sue return to Christminster where Jude, wrapped in his vision of the haloed city on Remembrance Day, and Sue, wrapped in her misery and fatigue, fail again to predict and control events which end in the terrible murder by Little Time of Jude and Sue’s two children followed by his own suicide, and in the still birth of the child Sue is carrying [*Choice, Experience and Sociality Corollaries*]. It is bitter satisfaction to the reader if he/she construed Jude, Sue and Little Time well enough on a first reading of the novel to predict the catastrophe.

After the tragedy Jude cannot understand Sue’s reaction. He has now rattled along the groove from *Christian* pole to the opposite *Pagan* pole of the construct he has shared with Sue, no longer finding comfort in the Christian religion, while Sue has rattled from *Pagan* to *Christian* and insists on sacrificing herself on the altar of guilt by returning to Phillotson. It seems to Jude that her brilliant intellect has broken. We can see that Jude and Sue simply have slid past each other to opposite ends of the same construct.

Arabella having returned from Australia, having been divorced from Jude, re-married, and widowed, now determines to marry Jude again. She predicts and controls as concretely and clearly as before and although she uses a slightly different method of manipulation, she is just as successful in accomplishing the second marriage as the first [*Choice, Experience and Sociality Corollaries*].

When Jude dies at Christminster at the age of about thirty, we are reminded that he once predicted that he would at that age, like Jesus, just be beginning his ministry (III.1.104). His predic-

tion failed because his imagistic constructs did not match reality. On the other hand, Arabella who remains as shallow and limited as ever still construes Jude and Sue accurately. While she and Mrs. Edlin wait by Jude’s body to see if Sue will come for the funeral, Mrs. Edlin says that Sue, as Mrs. Phillotson in fact as well as in name, has finally found peace. Arabella answers in the last sentence of the novel, “She’s never found peace since she left his arms, and never will again till she’s as he is now!” We have no reason to doubt Arabella’s construing of Jude and Sue nor the prediction she bases on it [*Experience and Sociality Corollaries*].

On his death bed Jude recites Job’s lament beginning, “Let the day perish wherein I was born ...” (VI.11.320). Hardy offers through Jude, then, a threefold context in which to construe Jude’s life – Jude, Jesus, and Job. We should also remember that Sue once called Jude “Joseph, dreamer of dreams,” comparing him to the Joseph of the Old Testament. The name *Joseph* clearly must also bring to mind St. Joseph of the New Testament, the protector of the Holy Family. If we place Jude as the third element in this construct, we see that Jude has failed both as a dreamer of dreams – or as a realizer of those dreams at any rate – and as protector of his own family. Jude’s own name, too, has a biblical origin in the name *Judas*. We immediately think of Judas Iscariot the betrayer, but, even as we consider whom Jude has betrayed besides himself, we must also remember the other Judas or Jude, the brother of James, who was one of the twelve apostles, and to whom one of the more obscure books of the New Testament is attributed. In addition to biblical personalities, Hardy has caused us to place Jude in the context of the poets, playwrights, scholars and churchmen he has read and with whom he has held imaginary dialogues at Christminster: Ben Jonson, Browning, Swinburne, Newman, Keble, Pusey, Gibbon, Peel, and perhaps it is not unreasonable to add Hardy himself as an element of the context in which we are to construe Jude.

If we want to try to see into Thomas Hardy’s construct system through the personality theory of George Kelly which is so congenial to it, the questions we are to ask, it seems, are, *In what way is Jude like Job but different from Jesus?* –

or if that seems too obvious to you (not to me), *In what way is Jude like Job but different from the Joseph of the Old Testament or the Joseph of the New Testament? Or, In what way is Jude like Judas Iscariot or different from him in comparison to the other Jude? Or, How is Jude Fawley like any two of the names listed above and different from any other.* We can arrange many such triads in the complex context Hardy offers us which includes Sue and Arabella, Mr. Phillotson, Aunt Drusilla, and assorted minor characters as well as the biblical and real personalities listed above.

If we are sincere and detailed in our responses to the multiplicity of triads, and if we avoid glib answers, we are certain to learn at least as much about our own construct systems as about Thomas Hardy's. Indeed in the Kellyan system, one of the great values of literature is the opportunity it offers for the examination of our own constructs, particularly our imagistic preverbal constructs which can do us ill if we use them as Thomas Hardy caused his characters Sue and Jude to do, but which can also do us great good if we develop awareness of them and move them toward verbal articulation, for that in turn will help us toward greater extension and definition of our construct systems, and toward a greater

ability to predict and control the events of our lives.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Cintra Whitehead (1929-2015) held an interdisciplinary doctorate in psychology and English literature and has taught in both fields. For a time she was publisher and contributing editor of *Constructive Criticism: A Journal of Construct Psychology and the Arts*. Retired from teaching, she lived in Ocala, Florida as a freelance writer and lecturer, concentrating on psychological literary criticism, critical theory, and personality theory.

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