

A History of the Association for Behavior Analysis¹

On October 5, 2002, a few members of ABA, faculty and staff of the Western Michigan University Psychology Department, and ABA staff, gathered together at 1219 South Park Street in Kalamazoo, MI to celebrate the inauguration of new office space for the Association. President Michael Perone performed the ceremonial cutting of the ribbon, which was followed by a reception in the new building.

The new beginning that this ceremony represented inspired some past ABA Secretary-Treasurers to look back to provide an account of some of the major events in the Association's history. In the following articles, Richard Malott remembers ABA's first 10 years in *The Founding of ABA*, David Lyon recalls the second decade in ABA's *Expansion of Influence* and Maria Malott remarks upon the past nine years in *Growth and Organizational Maturity*. In preparing these articles, the authors reviewed Executive Council meeting minutes from their terms of office and consulted key individuals regarding relevant sections, including Carol Pilgrim, Sigrid Glenn, Margaret Vaughan, and Jerry Mertens. However, the following pages are a personal account of the past 29 years, and the authors did not intend, and indeed space prohibited, that this be a comprehensive study of all the events that have taken place in the organization.

The Founding of ABA

By Richard Malott, Ph.D.

The Problem

As it is now, so it was in the early 70's: The Midwest was a behavior-analytic stronghold, but few behavior analysts could get their papers accepted by the Midwestern Psychological Association (MPA). For example, MPA rejected the presentations of notable, productive behavior-analytic scholars like Travis Thompson. As it turned out, the MPA program committee had an explicit policy of rejecting behavior-analytic presentations.

True, we could always present at the annual conferences of the Eastern Psychological Association (EPA), the American Psychological Association (APA), the Psychonomic Society, and the Association for the Advancement of Behavior Therapy (AABT). But we couldn't present in our own backyard, MPA, which met in Chicago.

The Solution

Many of us whined about this, but only one man did something about it. That man was Jerry Mertens, a faculty member at St. Cloud University (Saint Cloud State College, at the time).

I first saw Jerry Mertens at APA '68 in San Francisco—a huge, hyperkinetic bear of a man, with long, shaggy brown hair and a long, shaggy brown beard shouting, gesticulating, and enthusing about "Consequence in Education" to a large, captivated audience. I was so impressed, I remember the event 35 years later.

Well, the 70's was a decade of protest against the establishment. And a common form of protest against establishment conferences was to hold an alternative-conference, same time, same place, next door, with the goal of forcing the establishment to open their doors to the alternative folks.

So, at the last minute, Jerry and Izzy Goldiamond threw together a two-day, concurrent, alternate conference at the University of Chicago in 1974. We were delighted that almost 100 people attended. And so was born the Midwestern Association of Behavior Analysis (MABA), with the goal of holding a more formal alternative-to-MPA conference in '75, with the ultimate goal of gaining acceptance of behavior analysis by MPA.

Neil Kent, from Western Michigan University (WMU), felt that Jerry would not have sufficient human resources at St. Cloud to pull off a real conference and so offered to collaborate with him. And one human resource Jerry would not have for that next conference would be Marge Vaughn (AKA Maggie Peterson), a high energy little nifty whom Jerry had turned on to behavior analysis, who had played a key role in organizing the U. of Chicago conference, and who was just entering the M.A. program at WMU. Knowing that Marge would be at WMU and could keep the WMU end of things from completely falling apart, he agreed to share the responsibility with Neil and WMU. Marge would work under Neil, helping to organize the first MABA conference, for which she received independent-study credit, as MABA had no money for a paid staff.

But, midway through the fall of '74, Marge came to me in tears because she could never find Neil to get the work done and she didn't have sufficient clout on her own. Would I help. Yes, I would.

I would bring my considerable behavioral systems analysis skills to bear on the creation of MABA and its first conference. Those skills consist mainly of an expertise in delegatory technology—the ability to get everyone else to do the work, while kicking back and downloading Napster (or whatever the comparable form of degeneracy was in the 70's). When you don't have money to pay staff, the distinction between a good performance manager and a con-artist is a subtle one.

¹ The authors thank Majda Seuss for careful editing of this article.

Well, MABA would be brand new and unknown; so we wanted to have a bevy of superstar headliners to attract attendees—with luck 200 or maybe 300 attendees. And we didn't want to rely on our call for papers, which could be too easily ignored by the superstars. So we sent out personal invitations to the big guys. We were so bold as to even invite them big guys from the east coast, big guys like Charlie Catania. And, amazingly, almost all accepted, though we not only could not pay them, they even had to pay for their own registration. Outrageous, but it worked. Personal invitations are always worth the hassle.

And, in addition to 20 invited superstars, MABA '75 had an attendance of 1,100, not 300. And, at the end of the conference, east-coast superstar Charlie Catania said that MABA was the best thing to happen to behavior analysis since JEAB and JABA (or words to that effect) and he'd be back next year, with or without a personal invite. Imagine that. Build it right, and they may come.

Wagging the Dog

And the hotel was a delight—the Blackstone, just the right level of decaying elegance befitting an alternative, protest conference, and right across the alley from MPA's Hilton—perfect for the active interchange and cross breeding between MPA and MABA that Jerry saw as crucial to the behavioralization of MPA.

But, it didn't work. To my knowledge, no one from MABA attended MPA; and no one from MPA attended MABA. Never depend on natural contingencies to support difficult behavior.

Jerry had turned over ultimate control of MABA to the MABA Organizational Committee. And because MABA, as a stand-alone organization, had been such a success, and because MABA had had no impact on MPA, and because of schedule conflicts, the committee voted to cut loose from MPA and meet when and where was best for MABA. Always be flexible enough to go for targets of opportunity.

Jerry objected to the mission shift. His goal was to influence MPA. Disappointed with the vote, he abandoned MABA to continue his seduction of MPA.

While concentrating on MABA, I continued to work with Jerry on MPA, though I thought it was a lost cause. But to my surprise, Jerry managed to get Jim Dinsmoor elected to the MPA Council of Directors in 1973, Nate Azrin as President in 1974, Sid Bijou as a Council member in 1974, and Ken MacCorquodale on the Council after that.

How'd he do it? Even in large organizations, few people send in nominations, so a small, coordinated group (e.g., Jerry's MPA behavior analysts) can easily get their person on the ballot; then that person has a fighting

chance of getting elected by the general membership (who, in this case, did not have an anti-behavior-analysis bias). A small, organized cohort can exert influence beyond its numbers.

But the behavioralization of MPA was short lived. The reactionary forces of MPA regrouped and recouped. This leads to Don Baer's wisdom concerning maintenance of changes in organizations: After the behavioral revolution, beware the counter-revolution.

In 1988, Jerry returned to ABA, bringing his undergraduate students with him. He was wise enough to time-limit his grudge.

The Evolution from MABA to ABA

Now Jerry's mission had been to behavioralize MPA. My mission had been to provide a conference that my students, the WMU students, and the Midwestern students could attend. So, it had to be in the Midwest, because clearly students could not afford to go to EPA, all the way out to the east coast, nor could they afford to go to APA, which met in such remote locations as San Francisco, New Orleans, Washington DC, and Disney World. I saw no need for another national organization; since we already had the Behavior Analysis Division 25 of APA, though Division 25 had been seriously weakened by the emergence of MABA. But, if behavior analysts from all over the country wanted to come to the Midwest, cool.

And, like Jerry, I was voted down. Clearly, MABA was functioning as a *de facto* national organization; and we should change its name and mission, to recognize that. Thus ABA was born, again reflecting the wisdom of going for targets of opportunity. And it turns out that Midwestern student participation has not been hurt by a floating ABA.

The Founders of MABA/ABA

Jerry Mertens

Jerry Mertens started MABA → ABA to gain acceptance by MPA. That mission failed, but most of us think ABA is an even more significant accomplishment. Without Jerry, there absolutely would be no ABA. ABA was not an idea whose time had come. In fact, our success took us all by surprise. Who is Jerry Mertens? A teacher at St. Cloud. What has he published? Damned little, certainly nothing in JABA or JEAB. Where'd he get his Ph.D? He didn't, he only has an M.A. Yet, without Jerry Mertens, you wouldn't be reading this ABA Newsletter, because there'd be no ABA. Who is Jerry Mertens? One of the world's greatest teachers of behavior analysis. He coaches a farm team that sends many great, well trained, turned-on undergrads into the big-league behavior-analytic grad programs. Jerry also runs the Magical Behavioral Bus tour which he fills up with people from around the country, undergrads, a few grads students, an occasional faculty member, and takes a summer tour around the behavioral centers of the USA, having the students intensively read, study, and

report on each center, before and after visiting. By the end of that trip, the students have learned a lot of behavior analysis, and lost a lot of sleep. At least he ran this bus tour, until discouraged by the bureaucratic, narrow-minded reluctance of the executive committee of a major behavior analytic program located in Kalamazoo, to grant undergrad credit for such a wonderful educational experience. But, I believe Jerry will rise again. Who is Jerry Mertens? He is a dream chaser. With amazing intensity and creativity, he has devoted his life to saving the world with behavior analysis, mainly by training them up and shipping them out.

Jerry is still teaching his butt off at St. Cloud.

Neil Kent

Who is Neil Kent? Neil was the man who had the vision. He had the vision of what the Psych Department at WMU could become. He and Roger Ulrich shared that vision. Without them, that program would still be the mediocre, eclectic program it was before them. Behavior analysis at WMU was not an idea whose time had come. Its success certainly took me by surprise and its continued survival goes against the predictions of many. Neil had the vision, and the social/political skills to realize that vision.

Neil also had the vision of what MABA/ABA could become. He knew the potential importance of MABA/ABA, more than all the rest of us combined. And he knew the importance of getting WMU involved in the creation and maintenance of MABA/ABA. And he had the social/political skills to get our department to commit the needed resources.

Who is Neil Kent? What has he published? Damned little, certainly nothing in *JABA* or *JEAB*. Who is Neil Kent: just another dream chaser. A dream chaser who spent much of his professional life setting up effective behavioral systems like WMU Psych and MABA/ABA and then fading out to leave the maintenance of those systems to the rest of us. Without Neil Kent, there'd be no ABA.

Neil has now retired.

Marge Peterson

Marge was a mere first-year M.A. student when she played a crucial role in the creation of MABA/ABA. She could get things organized and get things done, in a way that Mertens and Kent certainly couldn't. Without her, there would be no ABA. She charmed and coerced students and faculty alike to build a major conference in year one, when there had been none before. What had she published at the time she played an essential role in the creation of MABA/ABA? Absolutely nothing, of course (she was fresh out of undergrad school), let alone anything in *JABA* or *JEAB*. No Marge, no MABA/ABA.

From the start, she shared with me the position of Secretary-Treasure of MABA and in 1978 became the sole Secretary-Treasure of ABA, demonstrating that she

didn't need me to run things. Then she did an extended post-doc with Skinner, became Maggie Vaughn, and took a teaching position at Salem State College, where she's still teaching. But she was just a first-year grad student when she played a crucial role in the creation of MABA/ABA and she was still a mere grad student when she became the sole Secretary-Treasure of ABA—the Head Mama.

Incidentally, at the same meeting where grad student Marge Vaughn was appointed as the sole person primarily responsible for running ABA, I had to argue with faculty members on the Council to allow me to have another grad student, Kathy Wright, as my Co-chair of the ABA Program Committee. My observation is that faculty members have too strong a tendency to dis students...really.

Dick Malott

My role was the behavior systems analyst, the man with bubble gum and duct tape who tried to keep it all together, the master of delegatory tech. A good conman and a handful of dedicated undergrad and/or grad students can move the world.

In general, I find that it's easier to get students to do the butt-busting work needed to pull off something as big and complex as MABA/ABA than to get faculty to do so. To chair an action-oriented faculty group is an exercise in frustration until you realize that the only ones who will reliably get things done are you and your students.

Now, that's not completely true. If you can talk a faculty member into chairing a committee where failure will have serious consequences, then that person and that person's students can do amazing work, usually.

There's more than one way to contribute to the saving of the world with behavior analysis. In addition to people with strong basic and applied research skills, our field needs dedicated dream chasers, who have the vision, or the tenacity, or the management skills to create and maintain systems like ABA, where we can all display our wares.

Other Early Student Creators

ABA's Student Volunteers

Marge and I had set up the MABA Coordinating Committee at WMU, consisting of an occasional faculty member and a few grad students. This was the main planning and logistic committee of MABA. Then a skinny girl in t-shirt & jeans wandered in. She wanted to be part of the action. She wanted to help. But we didn't need any help; if anything, it looked to me like she needed help. So what could she do for us? She could organize a group of student volunteers to run the conference. Who needs student volunteers?

Well she persisted, recruited a large group of students. And then the t-shirt-&-jeans girl imposed something like a \$1,000 dress code for all student volunteers. A code that persists to this day. And that's how you can discriminate between the ABA student volunteers and the full members. The students look really terrific, while the full members are often mistaken for the janitors.

And the skinny t-shirt-&-jeans-girl convinced her fellow students to work 40 hours at MABA for something like a commemorative t-shirt and a commemorative coffee cup.

Student volunteers have been crucial to ABA's ability to pull off a great conference every year and still keep the cost within limits.

The t-shirt-&-jeans-girl also had the vision. She knows what the mission is. And she knows how to achieve it. She knows how to get large numbers of people to buy into that vision and how to get them to work their collective butts off achieving that vision. She went on to get her M.A. and Ph.D., then to teach in Saint Mary's University in Halifax, Canada and start a long career of organizing excellent international and national behavior-analysis conferences. And to change her name from Linda Parrot to Linda Hayes. And to move back to the US of A. And rather than be the typical underemployed Ph.D. wife at her Ph.D. husband's university, she formed her own self-capitalized Behavior Analysis Program in that university (University of Nevada, Reno), which has become one of the outstanding M.A./Ph.D. behavior-analysis programs in the country and has branched out with satellite M.A. programs in other states. And, most recently, she created ABA's Council of Directors of Behavioral Programs. None of her creations were ideas whose time had come. Without her none of her creations would exist today. That woman had the vision, and she still does, better than almost anyone I know. Linda Hayes is a queen of the dream chasers. But she was just a first-year grad student when she helped MABA/ABA have a great beginning and when she implemented a component of MABA/ABA that continues to keep it cooking so well.

ABA's International Committee

Kathy Krumhus got her M.A. at WMU, did a couple Peace Corp years in Africa, and returned to get her Ph.D. with Neil Kent. And among the Americans, she almost alone had the international vision. Along with fellow grad students Marco Wilfredo Salas Martínez from Mexico and Okechukwu Ozuzu from Africa, she formed an ad hoc international group that raised a little money by throwing house parties in Kzoo and facilitated international participation in MABA. Because of the groups success, in 1977 MABA's Council approved their request to be recognized as MABA's International Behaviorists Special Interest Group.

Then one of the Ph.D. council members objected to the notion that grad students be allowed to chair such an

important SIG, failing to appreciate that the reason the SIG existed was because of the vision and organizational skills of those grad students and that no Ph.D. had demonstrated that vision nor those skills with regard to the international issues. Fortunately, the grad students were allowed to chair and run the SIG, at least long enough to get it on a sufficiently sound footing that Ph.D.s could take it over without doing too much damage.

After receiving their Ph.D.s, Kathy went to Katmandu to establish a rural teacher-training program, changed her name from Krumhus to Goodman, and then went to Jakarta and Bangkok to do international behavioral systems analysis, and is now in Washington D.C.; Marco returned to Mexico, where he is president of the Pedagogical University of Veracruz, where he continues to play a crucial role in the maintenance of a strong behavior analysis presence; and OK returned to Africa and is now in Florida working in developmental disabilities.

Though some parochial Ph.D.s questioned the motives of Americans interested in international behavior analysis, suggesting they were just looking for international vacations, Kathy, Marco, and OK, mere grad students, had the vision to understand that, if we were to save the world with behavior analysis, we needed behavior analysts all over the world. Dream chasers; and Kathy chased her dream all around the world.

Today, ABA has a strong, worldwide orientation; and it's getting stronger. Now, most of ABA understands that "saving the world with behavior analysis" means more than saving the USA. And a handful of grad students were responsible for pointing ABA in that direction.

Behaviorists for Social Responsibility

Harry Kent was a doctoral student of mine with a rapidly developing sense of social responsibility, so rapidly developing that by the time he'd finished his excellent dissertation at the Kalamazoo People's Food Co-op, he agreed to publish it only if he could footnote the caveat that his dissertation was a lot of crap because its pay-for-performance incentive system was a corruption of the working class and inconsistent with his newly developed Marxist-Leninist social sensitivity—a caveat and thus a publication I felt compelled to decline. But Harry Kent (no relation to Neil) also had the vision, a true vision of the social responsibility to save the world with behavior analysis, only later to be replaced by what he considered the incompatible world saving tools of Marxist-Leninism. And Harry too was an excellent and persuasive behavioral systems analyst, so persuasive that he was able to convince a bunch of hippie, anti-money food co-opists to implement a \$-based performance-management system, so persuasive that he was able to convince the head hippie co-opist, Marie Greening to enter our Behavior Analysis Program, where she did an M.A. thesis on her food co-op, so persuasive that she and fellow WMU grad students

Gary Gant and Elizabeth de la Ossa accompanied him down the road to Marxist Leninism.

But while on the road to Marxist Leninism and aided and abetted, as we say, by the Cal State, Sacramento cell of behavior-analytic faculty commie/commie-symp/neo-commie/ex-commie/anti-commies led by Joe Morrow, they started a small newsletter and a journal, with, yes, a red cover; and they formed the Radical Political Behaviorist group and the presumably less hard-core Behaviorist for Social Action group. And although these guys brought out the John Birch in even the most liberal ABA members, and although many of the ABA Council were sure the group was going to somehow embarrass ABA, I convinced the Council that there was nothing to worry about and that they should approve the groups request to form the official Behaviorists for Social Action Special Interest Group (BFSA SIG) of ABA.

Then when ABA moved its conference to Dearborn, because Illinois wouldn't pass the Equal Rights Amendment, the OBM track included a special symposium with top managers from Chrysler Corp, an organization which was busy laying off workers to protect its bottom line, presumably with little concern for the bottom lines of those workers. In the middle of this symposium, terrorists rushed in and threw meringue pies in the faces of our distinguished, visiting Chrysler Corp managers.

The BFSA SIG immediately denied any involvement and blamed the heinous crime on "outside agitators." But the ABA Council would have none of that and promptly replaced the student chairs of the BFSA SIG with a faculty member who could be counted on to demonstrate more decorum; I think that faculty member was Steve Hayes (the man whose ABA Follies was closed down because he showed a slide of the head of an important ABA woman superimposed on a nude body).

The BFSA SIG later metamorphosed into the Behaviorists for Social Responsibility SIG. And their red-covered journal metamorphosed into *Behavior and Social Issues*, both highly respectable, run by a respectable Ph.D.

Harry Kent was a young dream chaser. After graduating from WMU, he worked in developmental disabilities for Illinois. There is a good chance that we would have no Behaviorists for Social Responsibility SIG and no *Behavior and Social Issues* were it not for that student dream chaser. My only disagreement was with their idea that Marxist Leninism was incompatible with behavior-analytic performance management.

Other Early Faculty Creators

MABA's Feminist Movement

I was chairing MABA's first business meeting when a tough, man-eating, feminist, you know the type, stood up, her fist clenched in a power salute, virtually if not really, and asked, "What about the women's issues?" Huh? Can't we just sweep those under the rug? No, we

must make sure there's a strong role for women in MABA. What a pain in the butt.

Turns out that Elsie Pinkston was not a tough, man-eating feminist, just a frightened, embarrassed, little Kansas farm girl with a Ph.D. from the University of Kansas and a faculty position at the University of Chicago, but still a little farm girl scared spitless at having to make such a confrontational do in front of all these people. She didn't want to do that; but the big conscience of the little, Kansas farm girl would not let her avoid doing what that little, Kansas farm-girl conscience told her was the right thing to do.

Elsie was the first woman elected to the MABA Council. And awkward though it was for her, she kept the women's issues on the front burner, and wouldn't let us good old boys sweep them under the carpet, to mix a metaphor or two. Elsie had the vision and stayed true to it. Without her and her fellow feminists, in early MABA/ABA, the wonderfully strong women's presence in ABA might not now be as impressive; and we might not have had nearly as many women presidents and council members as we have had, over the years. And without the explicit intervention of women like Elsie, the role of women in ABA might be much less significant; the natural contingencies alone often fail to produce significant social improvements; things do not necessarily just get better on their own.

Why is the Experimental Analysis of Behavior Alive and Well in ABA?

Why isn't EAB completely obscured by us M&M pushers? Because, from the git-go, Art Snapper, at the time a faculty member at WMU, assumed the responsibility of making sure that EAB was always well represented in the MABA/ABA program.

Why does ABA have *The Behavior Analyst* (TBA)? And why is TBA like it is?

Scott Wood, a faculty member at Drake University, had that particular vision. He thought MABA should have a journal, and not another *JEAB* or *JABA*, but rather a theoretical and organizational journal like *APA's American Psychologist*. He had the vision and the verbal skills to make it happen. He convinced MABA's Council and then brought it into being. And over the years, TBA has remained reasonably true to Scott's early vision.

What ABA Needs

ABA needs people with Ph.D.s. And also MAs. And B.A.s. ABA needs students. ABA needs women. ABA needs people with the vision and the behavior-systems-analysis skills to turn that vision into reality. MABA/ABA needed such people to get it going; and it needs them to keep it from stagnating. ABA needs dream chasers. And that's one of the delightful things about ABA—it's got 'em. Check out the program. Talk to the folks hanging out in the lobby. ABA has many people who've spent much of

their lives chasing a behavior analytic dream in an effort to save or to understand one little part of the world or another. There are few issues of human concern that at least someone in ABA hasn't tried to address, all the way from getting an autistic kid to touch his nose, to social welfare for an entire country, to achieving international peace. And they do so with considerable intelligence, considerable behavior analytic expertise, and considerable dedication. ABA has many great dream chasers.

But, most of all, ABA needs students. Without students, there would have been no MABA.

Without students, there would be no ABA. And without students, there will be no behavior analysis. Our #1 priority is to recruit, train, and properly place students.

ABA's Biggest Problem

ABA's biggest strength is its student membership (in 2002, 36% of ABA's 3,923 members were students). ABA's biggest problem is maintaining those students once they graduate. ABA's biggest problem is converting student memberships to full memberships. If we were successful at this, ABA would now have 40,000 members instead of 3,923 members. For example, most of the original student founders and creators are fond but distant ABA memories. That doesn't mean some are not still practicing behavior analysis, but there is a strong tendency for even our most dedicated and active grad students to gradually abandon most of their behavior analytic repertoire they worked so hard to acquire and we faculty members worked so hard to help them acquire; there is a strong tendency to regress to the common-sense, mentalistic mean. And the main function of ABA should be to attenuate that regression. We can never depend on natural contingencies to support difficult behavior.

For a wonderful, less opinionated, more factual account of this early history, see Marge Peterson's (1978) article.

Reference

Peterson, M. E. (1978). The Midwestern Association of Behavior Analysis: Past, Present, Future. *The Behavior Analyst*, 1, 3-15.

ABA'S Expansion of Influence (1984-1993)

By David Lyon, Ph.D.

This contribution, entitled Expansion of Influence, is not a record of ABA's academic contributions and there is no mention here of SAFMEDS, Direct Instruction, polydipsia or the establishing operation. It is a history based upon Executive Council minutes and, for better or for worse, a lingering memory of the transpired events reflected in that record.

In May 1984 the Council meeting opened at the Opryland Hotel in Nashville, Tennessee, with a motion to

approve the same site for the 1987 convention. It was an extravagant and top-rated venue, but one that Fred Keller often jokingly called a home of "gilded characters." Council also rescinded the boycott of states that had failed to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment, a disapproval that had transplanted the meetings from Chicago to Milwaukee for several years, prolonging an unwelcome regional appearance to the organization. Subsequent changes in meeting sites from Philadelphia to Nashville to Las Vegas helped to promote a national agenda and shed the original Midwest affiliation as an adjunct to the Midwest meetings of the American Psychological Association.

The agenda for that 1984 meeting included a presentation by Frederick King on the status of legislation regarding animal research. The Association was asked to join an informal coalition to counter the efforts of the Mobilization for Animals, an active group that vehemently opposed animal research, and was based in Columbus, Ohio, the site of the upcoming convention. At a later discussion of the topic, Israel Goldiamond rose from his wheel chair declaring that animal research might one day create the opportunity for him to walk again. It was, to say the least, an emotional time.

As the meeting wore on, a committee on corporate technology transfer was established, the initial organization of a certification board was completed and the application for the Behavior Analysts Against Nuclear War as a special interest group was denied. The nature of the issues and Council's decisiveness in their discussion set the tone for expansion of the Association's influence over the next several years.

Right to Effective Treatment

Issues concerning effective education and treatment were raised in part by proposed legislation in Massachusetts concerning the use of aversive control procedures. At the fall meeting in 1986, Council directed the president to write letters to key members of the Massachusetts legislature expressing ABA's concern about the legislation that could "create a possibility of unexpected and undesired consequences in treatment outcomes due to the wording of the bill." Philip Himeline in turn noted that the critical issue was "the right to treatment based upon effectiveness, not the appearance of the treatment procedures or the institution in which the treatment takes place." Beatrice Barrett was appointed chair of the Right to Effective Education task force and was later commended for her effective testimony that helped defeat the proposed legislation limiting aversive control procedures in Massachusetts. The task force on the Right to Effective Treatment, chaired by Ron Van Houten, was named the most productive committee of the year and Council charged the task force with drafting a model bill on effective treatment. Finally, Council also approved a symposium on the right to effective treatment for the 1987 convention to be scheduled with minimal conflict

and an invitation was extended to Stewart Agras to serve as presidential guest.

In the spring of 1986 the Outstanding Action Award was approved by Council with the intent of recognizing individuals who sought to improve the quality of life for some segment of society. Although it was not so written, the ensuing discussion implied that the recognized action might be socially unpopular. Marlin Schneider, Representative of the Wisconsin State Legislature, was named as the first recipient for initiating legislation to insure that grandparents would assume responsibility for grandchildren born to minors.

The following fall, Council approved two other Outstanding Action Awards, the first to Robert Sherman for outstanding legal action insuring a person's right to effective treatment and the second to Leo and Claudi Soucy, who approved and supported the effective use of aversive control in curing the self destructive behavior of their developmentally disabled child.

These awards were presented at the 1987 convention, a ceremony that in turn set off a heated discussion of the matter during the business meeting at the end of the 1987 convention and consequently a general furor within the behavioral community. In spite of the uproar, Council did not recant, but approved a motion that any public statement about the awards be "by joint authorship of the Council that elected to present the awards."

The award itself was a bronze sculpture of a frog, cast near Lawrence, Kansas, and mounted tastefully on a wooden plaque. The identification of the frog as the Association's mascot in this manner was a curiosity to some and an insult to others, adding to the rancor of the situation. The frog image grew from a student skit at Western Michigan University, and a subsequent tongue in cheek article noted that this creature grows from tadpole to frog, survives in aquatic and land environments and is not susceptible to conditioning procedures. All of these strengths seemed to reflect the characteristics of a good behavior analyst; a maturing problem solver with a keen awareness of the environment and steadfast independence. The frog's notoriety remained until November 1988, when Jon Bailey objected to the mascot and recommended it be replaced by the American Bald Eagle, bringing the demise of the frog's appearance on any subsequent materials published by ABA.

The "awards debate" and the frog awards changed the organization's perception of itself and the manner in which it conducted its business. An awards committee was created by Council and henceforth all awards would be based on "specified criteria, and not on characteristics of an intended recipient." The task force on the Right to Effective Treatment was instructed to bring its final report to Council in May 1988. Subsequently, Brian Iwata was asked to abstract a proposed position statement from that report which in

turn was sent to the membership for ratification, showing a heightened sensitivity to the democratic process.

Public Relations and Association Building

The decision by Council to present the controversial awards ignited an emotional outburst within the Association but, in turn, also created an increased awareness of public relations. In October 1987, Edward Morris reviewed the history of the misrepresentation of the awards to the Soucys and to Sherman in the Newsletter of the Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps, in which it was claimed that the award was presented for "defending the use of aversive procedures." Morris initiated a campaign to correct not only this error, but other misstatements of behavior analysis appearing in text books and in other publications in the academic and popular press. The public campaign was the first of its kind.

A press room had been planned for the 1985 convention in Columbus, anticipating difficulty with the Mobilization for Animals group, but the issues of the right to effective treatment and the ensuing discussions, and, yes, arguments that followed the Soucy awards ignited a far larger concern than a room at the convention with press packets. Eventually, Henry Schlenger was appointed as media relations coordinator for the Association.

Professional problems seemed to abound in 1987. Massachusetts Senate bill #1709, California Assembly bill #520 and United States Senate bill #1673 each contained language with a potential impact upon the regulation of aversive control procedures. At one point in the discussion, Henry Pennypacker suggested the issue be brought to the attention of Night Line, a popular and pejorative news program at the time.

The Association's outlook showed a considerable change during this period. Ogden Lindsley recommended the creation of a Council of Presidents of the many behavioral societies to organize and take action on issues of concern to behavior analysts. In October 1987, Barbara Etzel reported on an informal meeting at the APA convention of presidents of Division 25 and the Association for the Advancement of Behavior Therapy. While AABT subsequently declined any further association with outside organizations, the ABA Council made direct contact with Division 25 of the APA, the American Association of Mental Deficiency, the National Society for Performance and Instruction, the Society of Behavioral Medicine, and the Society of Applied Learning Technology. Council also established liaisons with Psychonomics, the Association for Retarded Citizens, the Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps, and the Council for Exceptional Children.

Subsequently, Henry Pennypacker moved to hold a convention concurrently with the meetings of the American Association of Mental Deficiency. At the same time, representatives from the Neural Network Society and Youth Policy Magazine, a Washington based publication for politicians, sought a relationship with ABA. These were exceptional changes for an organization that was initially established to serve an adjunctive role to the Midwestern Psychological Association.

The fast paced changes raised a concern among the representatives of the scientific and academic communities both in ABA and APA that professional issues were dominating the future of the organizations. In ABA at least, the issues of the right to effective treatment and the awards to the Soucys served as the incentive to broaden its public relations and expand its cooperation with other professional organizations. There had been considerable change in the maturity of the organization since those initial meetings in Chicago, and in May 1988 Henry Pennypacker moved that Council adopt a resolution of intent to restructure the Association. In November that year, Council instructed Brian Iwata, then Association President, to draft a reorganization proposal for review and eventual presentation to the membership.

Financial Developments

The Association's administrative offices were established at the university of the Secretary Treasurer, and a succession of these appointments at Western Michigan University created a permanent niche in the Psychology Department, where space was made available. The Association used the space without overhead charges, gained access to the University accounting system and integrated the office staff into the University employee system providing employee benefits and security. While the development of the programs at the convention was the work of volunteers, the office staff, at least, attained some professional standing. Eventually, Western Michigan University revamped the Wood Hall facility where ABA was housed, and all of the departments left the premises for temporary facilities on Western's east campus. The Association never moved back and remained there in West Hall.

In spite of the financial advantages of office space within the department, the Association struggled during this period. For many years, the initial investments for the annual convention were borrowed from the Department of Psychology, which often paid for printing, phones, and mailing costs, which were reimbursed once registration fees were collected. The annual meetings coincided with the end of the Department's fiscal year, and juggling the books became an annual form of entertainment as the Association continued to fund itself with "lunch money," as one critic characterized its financial status. Indeed,

through most of the 1980s ABA paid for its expenses almost as quickly as the money was received, but nevertheless was able to set some money aside for growth and financial security.

The Society for the Advancement of Behavior Analysis, approved under the 501(c)3 tax code as an educational entity that could receive gifts that were tax deductible for the donor, was created in 1980. Within weeks after the approval, a substantial gift was received from Fred Skinner for the purchase of a computer/typewriter. Council constituted the voting membership of the society which met its educational mission by the publication of the Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis, the organization of paper sessions at ABA's annual meeting and a planned program of student support. As a result, the Association transferred funds annually to cover the cost of JABA that was sent to members as a part of the Association dues. The coordinated yet separate efforts of the two organizations strengthen both the character and the fiscal status of the behavior analytic movement.

Certification

The development of a certification examination began in 1977 when the Education and Evaluation Committee was established, but it was not until the fall of 1984 that a formal committee was established with Henry Slucki as chair. Certification was considered to imply minimum standards of competence and was believed to encourage academic excellence. A large number of hours were devoted to the development of questions for the general examination and the consideration of specialty areas. Eventually tests were administered and money was collected from potential candidates and it appeared as though the program would survive, but it did not go well. In May 1987 Council disbanded the certification committee and established a task force to review the previous efforts on certification. Jan Shelton was appointed as chair. In November 1988, Council approved a review process for the accreditation of doctoral programs in behavior analysis and charged the task force with developing proposed standards with some latitude. Furthermore, Council recommended that representatives from Auburn, California at San Diego, Florida State, Ohio State, Southern Illinois, Florida, Kansas, West Virginia and Western Michigan University be appointed to the task force. A number of people within the Association had questioned the certification of individuals and for the moment at least, this issue would remain fallow as Council turned its attention to the certification and recognition of doctoral programs.

On another front, ABA offered to assist the Association for the Advancement of Behavior Therapy with the development of a diplomat in behavior therapy.

Expansion of Influence

When the Association was established in 1974, as the Midwestern Association for Behavior Analysis, the intent was to hold meetings that paralleled those of the

Midwestern Psychological Association. Papers concerning issues of interest to behavior analysts were not readily accepted by MPA, and the new Association sought to change that. When Illinois failed to approved the equal rights amendments, the Association was chased out of Chicago in protest and went east to Dearborn, MI. The Association was growing annually, and in 1979 even added the descriptor "An International Organization," but its sphere of influence had a distinct Midwestern flavor.

The Association's sphere of influence changed rapidly with the affiliation of state organizations, the development of a wide range of special interest groups within the Association, and the influx of international scholars. By 1987 these groups included concentrations in education, gerontology, social action, computer users, direct instruction, ethical and legal issues, interbehaviorists, verbal behavior and organizational behavior management. The regional groups stretched from the Berkshires to Tennessee and Southern California.

If there was a turning point in this period, however, it was the events that surrounded the right to effective treatment. The Association became politically active, and successfully so, changing legislation that impacted behavior analysis. The award to Schneider for legislation concerning grandparents, caused nary a ripple, but the awards to Sherman and to the Soucys forced a maturing of opinion. The academic discussion of punishment, the history of Skinner's animal model and the research on punishment by Nate Azrin with pigeons created a solid empirical footing for the use of aversive control procedures, but the application of those procedures to humans in applied settings forced people to take a stand with public consequences. It was no longer an academic argument, but one with ethical and legal implications. All of a sudden it counted, and that meant behavior analyses counted, and the influence of the tenants of behavior analysis were reaching far beyond a few experimental behavioral change programs, lessons in the academic classroom and research findings presented at annual meetings.

Perhaps it was out of necessity or perhaps it was the confidence attained by the conflict and the political success, albeit limited, that pushed ABA into association with other professional organizations, forced them to consider issues of professional accreditation and the promotion of technology. In this brief period, experience, controversy, and conflict set the stage for an ultimate maturity from a collection of Midwestern paper sessions to an international organization of principle, program and progress.

Growth and Organizational Maturity

By Maria E. Malott, Ph.D.

Administration

In October of 1993 the ABA Executive Council met in Kalamazoo for its regular fall meeting. At that time the Council formally offered me the opportunity to serve as ABA's Executive Director/Secretary Treasurer. I was honored to accept the role, which began a week following the meeting. I attended a few hours of the Council meeting to get a sense of the management of the Association and learned of what came to be called "Black Monday". This was the day the previous summer when the then-Executive Director received a call from Western Michigan University indicating that ABA had not paid its expenses for approximately a year. The debt included much of ABA's administrative expenses as well as its payroll. The amount past due totaled \$100,000.

It was not easy for me and the rest of the Council to immediately assess the implications of that debt for the overall financial health of the organization. All financial decisions for the following year had been set at the May Council meeting. The situation was dire because the miscalculation accounted for 36% of ABA's operating expenses and drew attention to the fact that ABA did not have an adequate financial management system. Indeed, it took five months of following paper trails, data crunching, and analysis to appreciate the implications for the organization.

The financial review was the first item on the agenda of the May 1994 Council meeting. With the assistance of our accounting firm, the analysis showed that expenses had been exceeding revenue and that, if the financial practices of the previous five years continued, ABA would be out of existence within 18 months because its cash assets would be totally depleted. Kennon A. Lattal, then President, and Sigrid S. Glenn, Past-President, came to Kalamazoo in the summer of 1994 and we further reviewed the situation and formulated a preliminary plan to stabilize ABA financially and organizationally. The plan was finalized at the fall Council meeting with help from law and accounting firms and WMU's Human Resources Department. For ABA to survive, significant changes were necessary, not only in the finances, but also in streamlining the office, core processes engineering, vendor negotiations, organization structure and bylaws (see Lattal, Glenn, Malott, 1994).

In June 1995, after returning from the convention in Washington, D.C. and with many unprocessed transactions to finish, ABA was contacted by WMU and given 48 hours to move the office to a new location. Our space in Wood Hall adjacent to the Psychology

Department was to be renovated, and the whole Department was relocating to WMU's East Campus while Wood Hall was under construction. I found two students, Mathew Miller and Robert Schnars, from the Psychology Department, willing to provide critical assistance, and together we spent two long days carpeting and painting the temporary (and unrenovated) space. While we were getting the offices prepared for occupation, ABA's only full-time staff person accepted another position, making me the only staff member, with a contract that had been increased the previous year from the original 10 hours to 20 hours a week.

At the time, we were receiving many complaints from members and Board and Committee Chairs—rightly so, because our infrastructure was much too limited to support the organization. That summer I closed the office for two weeks and focused on hiring a full-time staff person with a financial degree to help with the bookkeeping of the organization.

I then recruited student support and we implemented all the directives of the Executive Council for stabilizing the organization. We developed an improvement plan using behavioral systems analysis technology. Since 1995, processes have been streamlined, one at a time: the convention program, membership, Web development, job placement, convention bookstore, and staff management, among others. In the years 1994-2002, ABA benefited from the outstanding work of faculty and students from many WMU departments: from graphic design to develop promotional materials, from operations research to enhance convention scheduling, from engineering to improve the computer technology infrastructure, from computer science to provide the Web interfaces that integrate administrative databases, and from the behavior analysis program to develop practical, useful, management systems. We have helped students assist the Association through class projects, master's projects, practica, theses, dissertations and internships.

As of October, 2002 ABA has four full-time staff members, a part-time Executive Director/Secretary Treasurer, and fine student support. ABA's professional team includes Majda Seuss, a five-year ABA veteran with a degree in English, who is in charge of publications; Amanda Wright, a business administration graduate who manages membership services; Jennifer Dau, a hospitality management graduate who coordinates the convention; and Shakila Patel, an accounting graduate who maintains the financial records of the organization. In addition, our student employees are enrolled in masters and doctoral programs in psychology, Kathy Culig, and Kent Smallwood, and in computer science, Zoheb Sait, Partha Bijjam and Alena Harrison. Lori Miller, who has been with us for seven

years, started working as an undergraduate student, received her master's degree and now is about to finish her doctoral degree in applied behavior analysis, conducting her M.A. thesis and doctoral dissertation research on the improvement of ABA's various behavioral systems.

In 2002, ABA diversified its assets to include a \$300,000 property fund. We were able to generate sufficient resources to purchase our own office building, a necessity precipitated by the fact that, after the Psychology Department's space was renovated in Wood Hall, there was no longer room for the ABA offices, and our allotted unrenovated space on East Campus was no longer sufficient to house the organization. On April 12, 2002, ABA made a cash purchase of a building near downtown Kalamazoo and began significant renovation of that space. We inaugurated our new location on October 5, 2002. Such an important development would have been impossible without the longstanding support of Western Michigan University and of its Psychology Department. Howard Farris and Wayne Fuqua—the two Psychology Department Chairs in the last ten years—have been most helpful with the interaction of ABA and WMU.



Figure 1. Inauguration. From L to R: Sigrid Glenn, Thomas Critchfield, Michael Perone, Edward Morris, Maria Malott, Jay Moore, Linda Hayes, and Jack Michael

Growth

During the past nine years ABA has experienced significant growth (See Morris, et al.). Figure two show that, since 1993, ABA increased its membership by 63%, from 2,409 in 1993 to 3,923 in 2002. Today ABA is comprised of 36% student members, 27% full members, and 26% affiliate members.

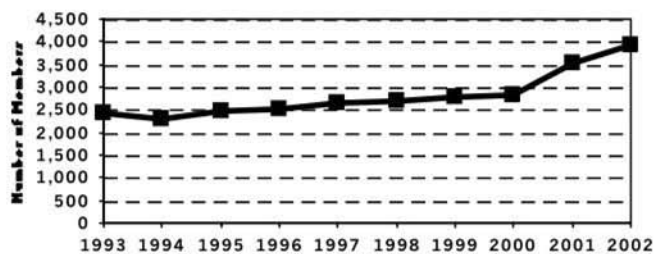


Figure 2. Membership Trends

The percent of members who live outside the United States has more than tripled since 1993. Today these members total 659. Members now represent 41 countries on five continents. In an effort to recruit international members, a sliding membership fee structure was adopted; membership fees are discounted 25%, 50% or 75% based on a country's average per capita income in relation to that of the United States. Masaya Sato, the first President of ABA not from the U.S., and Michael Davison, first International Representative to the Executive Council, along with a significant number of active members of the organization, have done considerable work for the international development of the organization.

Affiliated chapters are another indication of growth. Today we have 39 chapters, of which 15 are international. There has also been significant growth in some affiliated chapters. For instance, according to chapter reports, some of our largest chapters are Asociación Latinoamericana de Analisis y Modificación del Comportamiento (ALAMOC) (1,000 members), Australian Association for Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (1,000 members), and Florida Association for Behavior Analysis (830 members). Based on reported membership figures, today chapters have approximately 9,700 members. Another exciting development is that behavioral organizations in various countries are partnering to create regional associations. ALAMOC includes representation from several Latin American countries. The newly assembled European Association for Behavior Analysis has gotten together existing behavioral associations in the region, and, during the past couple of years, efforts have been made to assemble the Asian Association for Behavior Analysis.

Delegations of behavior analysts have been another initiative of the Executive Council to bring behavior analysis to areas of the world where there is little knowledge of it. A small international delegation of behavior analysts travel to a country help establish and support the development of behavior analysis. In 2001, an ABA delegation went to Russia and helped to assemble the Russian chapter of behavior analysis. In 2002, an ABA delegation went to China to support a recently created chapter, and a delegation is currently being planned for 2003.

Another area of growth has been conventions attendance, as seen in Figure 3. In comparison to 1993, annual convention attendance has grown 75%, from 1,650 in 1993 to 2,891 in 2002.

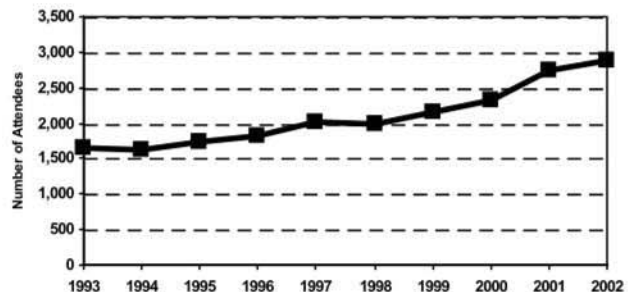


Figure 3. Convention Attendance

The most significant categories of membership attending the convention are: student members (35%), affiliate members (24%), and full members (22%). International conferences have recently been added to the regular annual ABA convention. The first international ABA conference was held in Venice, Italy in November 2001, and was attended by 264 people from 26 countries. The second conference will be held in Beijing, China in November 2004, and thereafter ABA plans to organize conferences every two years around the world.

Special Interest Groups (SIGs) have also been a critical part of the Association. The SIGs objective is "to contribute to the vitality and development of specific topics." SIGs contribute substantially to the variety and quality of the annual convention program. Their establishment and growth reflect the depth of interest and scholarship within the field. Based on SIG reports, today there are over 1,300 members across SIGs, the largest being the Development and Behavior Analysis SIG (250 members) and the Society for the Quantitative Analyses of Behavior (225 members).

Strategic Direction

Providing continuity to the initiatives of the Council had always been a challenge. Council has relied exclusively on the dedication and voluntary work of many Association members who already have a full agenda in their regular jobs; individual council members rotate every three years. Bill Redmon helped the Council to see the importance of hiring a Director who would provide continuity to Council directives. He was hired as the first Executive Director/Secretary Treasurer of ABA from 1988 to 1993. Redmon helped to organize Council activities, creating a model for consistent follow-up, and drafting the first strategic plan of ABA under the leadership of then President Philip Hinline. This original plan has been revised and simplified by Councils under the leadership of Kennon A. Lattal in 1994; Richard M. Foxx in 1995, Carol Pilgrim, in 2000, and Jack Marr in 2002.

The Council has continued to play an increasingly more strategic role by revising the way it makes decisions and allowing itself more time to address key issues for the advancement of the field. Enhanced strategies for decision making include systematically soliciting input from members about key issues of discussion prior to each Council meeting, an initiative that began in 1999; setting objectives for ABA boards and empowering Board Coordinators to manage their committees in ways compatible with those objectives; delegating administrative functions of the organization to the ABA office so Board

Coordinators and Council members have more time to focus on key objectives; making financial decisions based on rolling three-year projections; and using data whenever possible to make decisions.

In making strategic decisions in support of the field, the Council realized how little is known about who behavior analysts are, where they work, and where they study. Although efforts for an assessment of the discipline go back to 1987, it was in 1998 that President James Johnston and the Executive Council commissioned Linda Hayes to conduct the preliminary, human-resource component of a self-study of behavior analysis to begin to answer these questions. The study demonstrated the difficulty of collecting reliable data about the field, and resulted in recommendations for a more thorough study and the restructuring of ABA's databases to gather demographic, employment, and other relevant information about ABA members on an ongoing basis.

While serving as president, Sigrid Glenn, Carol Pilgrim and others proposed significant changes in the organization's structure so it aligns with the mission of ABA: "To develop, enhance and support the growth and vitality of behavior analysis through research, education and practice." ABA Boards have been created to focus on each of the main areas where advancement of behavior analysis is critical: research, education and practice. And each Board's committees focus on specific target areas.

Research is the focus of the Science Policy and Research Board. Its charge is "to advocate for and facilitate research," and its emphasis today is on influencing the federal government to allocate funding for behavioral research. In this pursuit, ABA joined the Federation of Behavioral, Psychological and Cognitive Sciences in 1992 and, in the past couple of years, has strengthened its influence in the Federation under the leadership of Marc Branch and now Michael Perone (see the President's column on the cover of this issue).

Education is the focus of the Education Board, the objective of which is "to develop, improve, and disseminate best practices in the recruitment, training, and professional development of behavior analysts." Recently, efforts of this Board are mainly conducted

through the Council of Directors of Graduate Training Programs in Behavior Analysis, initiated by Linda Hayes, and currently lead by Janet Ellis (Council Director) and Pam Osnes (Education Board Coordinator).

Practice has been mainly addressed by the Standards, Accreditation and Professional Affairs Board. This board focuses on issues relevant to certification of behavior analysts, specification of professional standards, and accreditation of behavioral programs.

One of the most important events in the past few years has been the creation of the Behavior Analyst Certification Board (BACB), an independent organization that adopted the State of Florida's certification exam and developed a national certification system for behavior analysts. Jim Johnston, Jerry Shook and Jon Bailey, who participated in the ABA and BACB Boards, helped to define the relationship between the two organizations and with other key players, among them Gina Green, Sigrid Glenn, Michael Hemingway, and John Jacobson, made behavior analysts aware of the need for certification and professional standards in maintaining the integrity of the field while meeting increasing consumer demand for our technology. Gina Green also led the development of a continuing education system for certified behavior analysts. In the same effort to preserve quality, a Presidential Task Force chaired by Bill Hopkins, recommended the establishment of the accreditation of graduate training programs to recognize quality master's and doctoral programs. Today there are 15 ABA-accredited graduate programs in behavior analysis (See page 17 for Janet Twyman's Accreditation Committee update).

For nearly three decades, ABA has grown and matured. However, behavior analysis is still young and much yet needs to be done. In recent Council meetings, major issues of discussion continue to be the challenges anticipated by accelerated growth, the need to maintain the integrity of the applied and basic components of our discipline, and the importance of strengthening higher education programs, so the field can generate qualified behavior analysts. We are in a better position than we have ever been to face those challenges and we look forward to the future with great expectation.

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