

An Introduction to the Volume 2, Number 2 of *Behavior Analysis in Practice (BAP)*

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Behavior analysts who practice in schools, private homes, and other community settings have a daunting task. They must keep abreast of current findings in our field and disseminate effective interventions while working with professionals, parents, and other caregivers who often have limited experience and training in behavior analysis. The overriding mission of *Behavior Analysis in Practice* is to assist practitioners with these endeavors. Articles describing best practices, reviews of the literature on emerging and established interventions, commentaries on key issues that impact practice, and evaluations of procedures that we can readily employ in naturalistic settings may help bridge the gap between science and practice. The articles appearing in this issue of *BAP* educate, inform, and offer solutions to our most pressing problems.

Tribute to a Pioneer

Leading this issue is a tribute to one of the field's founders, Dr. Sidney W. Biou. The death of Dr. Bijou on June 11, 2009, at the age of 100, provided an occasion to reflect on his long-standing contributions to the field, many of which established the foundation of current best practices. A number of obituaries describing his life and work have been published (or will soon be published) in such outlets as the *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, *The Behavior Analyst*, and *The American Psychologist*, among others. In lieu of soliciting another formal obituary, I invited students of behavior analysis to exhaustively examine Dr. Bijou's work, identify two or three studies that they felt had the greatest impact on practices used today, and describe this work for those who may not be directly familiar with it. Amber E. Mendres and Michelle A. Frank-Crawford, doctoral students at the University of Maryland-Baltimore County, eagerly accepted my invitation. The three studies that they highlighted in the article, "A Tribute to Sidney W. Bijou, Pioneer in Behavior Analysis and Child Development: Key Works that Have Transformed Behavior Analysis in Practice," were well chosen. The impact of these studies on the field are clearly illustrated in the interventions and approaches appearing in this issue of *BAP*.

Strategies for Successful Dissemination

The three empirical articles in this issue focus on practical approaches for assisting the greatest number of clients. The use of standardized, or "manualized," interventions that provide teachers and caregivers with a readily accessible way to change the behavior of many children is one strategy for promoting wide-spread dissemination of effective treatments. "First Step to Success," designed for young children who enter school at risk

for failure, is a standardized intervention based on differential reinforcement and extinction. It is appropriate for children who engage in attention-maintained problem behavior. In "A Preliminary Analysis of the Effects of Coaching Feedback on Teacher Implementation Fidelity of *First Step to Success*," Rodriguez and colleagues evaluated a relatively simple strategy for improving the integrity with which public school teachers implemented this intervention. Results were consistent with previous research, showing that performance feedback can be critical for maintaining treatment integrity.

Jessica Frieder and her colleagues took advantage of web-based technology to offer individualized assessment and intervention services to clients living in remote locations. In this demonstration project, behavior analysts affiliated with a university coached school personnel via the Internet while the personnel conducted a functional analysis and developed a treatment for a child who engaged in severe problem behavior. This pilot project, described in their paper, "Teleconsultation in School Settings: Linking Classroom Teachers and Behavior Analysts Through Web-Based Technology," has the potential to make behavior analytic services more broadly available to those who need them.

Finally, Lattimore and colleagues evaluated a simple strategy for promoting independence that behavior analysts could readily teach to staff, teachers, or caregivers who accompany individuals with disabilities in community settings. The intervention, called "SWAT Support," is a type of embedded teaching approach that involves three-step prompting and praise. Results of their evaluation, described in the paper, "Increasing Independence of Adults with Autism in Community Activities: A Brief, Embedded Teaching Strategy," showed that staff with and without prior relevant experience required only about 15 min of training to successfully implement SWAT Support with adults at work and at a store. As a result, the adults began to independently perform activities (e.g., put items in a shopping cart; obtain supplies from a secretary) that had been previously completed by support staff.

A Tutorial on the Motivating Operation

Behavior analysts who have a firm grasp of conceptual systems may be better equipped to identify functional relations and develop effective interventions for clients. In the first-ever tutorial published in *BAP*, Paul Langthorne tackles an incredibly important concept that is often overlooked in descriptive analyses of behavior. In "A Tutorial on the Concept of the Motivating Operation and its Importance to Application," Langthorne focuses in particular on the less

well-known taxonomy involving conditioned motivating operations originally described by Jack Michael. Through examples from the literature and everyday life, Langthorne elucidates this relatively complex conceptual system. This paper will become an essential resource for students, professionals, and others who are interested in learning more about this important concept.

The “Skeptics Corner” Returns!

The “Skeptics Corner” section returns with this issue, featuring two papers on the widespread use of medications to treat psychological problems. Behavior analysts commonly work with individuals who are taking medications for behavioral problems. Moreover, they are frequently questioned about the efficacy of medications from current and prospective clients. As such, it is important that practitioners keep abreast of the science and understand some of the factors that are responsible for the popularity of this treatment approach. In “Behavior Analysis in the Era of Medicalization: Current State of the Science and Recommendations for Practitioners,” Joseph Wyatt provides a critical look at current research on medication effects, discusses the state of the science for some common psychological problems (e.g., depression), and offers some guidelines for working more effectively in a society that emphasizes medication as therapy. An accompanying commentary and book review by Frans van Haaren focuses on the factors that may be responsible for the increased use of medication in this country. The paper, ‘Primum non nocere’: A review of *Taking America off Drugs: Why Behavioral Therapy is More Effective for Treating ADHD, OCD, Depression and Other Psychological Problems* by Stephen Ray Flora, provides readers with an overview and critique of the book, along with additional discussion of the history of the treatment of psychological problems and practices of the pharmaceutical and medical industries.

Book Reviews

Two additional reviews of recently published books – one geared towards general educators and the other geared towards families and caregivers of children with autism – also

appear in this issue of *BAP*. Jennifer L. Austin and Jennifer M. Soeda review *Behavior Analysis for Effective Teaching* by Julie S. Vargas, and Einar T. Ingvarsson reviews *Triumphs in Early Autism Treatment*, Edited by Ennio Cipani. These authors aim to provide behavior analysts with additional resources for working more effectively with professionals, parents, and other caregivers who have limited experience and training in behavior analysis.

Welcome Gregory P. Hanley, Incoming Editor of *Behavior Analysis in Practice*

It is my pleasure to announce that the ABA-I Council has selected Gregory Hanley to serve as the next editor of *BAP*. Gregory’s term officially began on Oct. 1, 2009, and he will be handling all of the manuscripts for the upcoming issues (beginning with Volume 3, No. 1). As a senior associate editor for *BAP*, Gregory served a critical role in shaping the mission, content, and procedures for the new journal. Gregory is currently an associate professor and director of the behavior analysis program at Western New England College. He received his doctoral degree in psychology with an emphasis in behavior analysis from the University of Florida in 2001 and was on faculty at The University of Kansas from 2001 to 2007. Gregory has had extensive editorial experience, serving as an associate editor for both *The Journal of Behavior Analysis* and *The Behavior Analyst*. As the 2006 recipient of the American Psychological Association, Division 25, B. F. Skinner Young Researcher Award, Gregory also has a distinguished research record. Please join me in welcoming Gregory! As of October 1, 2009, address manuscripts and inquiries to:

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