

20TH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE MARYLAND ASSOCIATION FOR BEHAVIOR ANALYSIS
HILTON BALTIMORE, BALTIMORE, MARYLAND: HOLIDAY 1, 2, 3
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2017
SCHEDULE

- 7:30 Registration & Continental Breakfast
- 8:30 **Welcome & Presidential Address – Louis Hagopian, Ph.D., BCBA-D, Kennedy Krieger Institute**
- 9:00 **Title: Facts & Fictions about the Functional Analysis of Problem Behaviors *BACB*APA***
SungWoo Kahng, Ph.D., BCBA-D University of Missouri

Abstract: The functional analysis of problem behaviors (Iwata, Dorsey, Slifer, Richman, & Bauman, 1982/1994) exhibited by individuals with developmental disabilities has become the gold standard of care during the treatment of these problem behaviors. Yet, there are commonly held misconceptions about its use. This presentation will discuss commonly held views about the use of functional analyses in practice (e.g., too difficult, not useful for all behaviors/individuals, unsafe) in terms of what are valid and invalid concerns.

SungWoo Kahng is an associate professor and chair of the Department of Health Psychology at the University of Missouri (MU) and the Founding Director the MU Graduate Programs in Applied Behavior Analysis. He is also the Director of the Applied Behavioral Intervention Service of the MU Thompson Center for Autism and Neurodevelopmental Disorders. Prior to his current position, he was a faculty member in the Department of Behavioral Psychology and a senior behavior analyst on the Neurobehavioral Unit at the Kennedy Krieger Institute as well as an associate professor in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. Dr. Kahng graduated from Kalamazoo College with a bachelor's of arts in psychology and received his Ph.D. in behavior analysis from the University of Florida. He is currently an Associate Editor for the *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis* where he also served on the Board of Editors. Additionally, he is on the Board of Editors for *Behavioral Intervention* and has served as an *ad hoc* reviewer for numerous other journals. He is a Board Certified Behavior Analyst and a Licensed Behavior Analyst in the State of Missouri. Dr. Kahng is on the Board of Directors of the Behavior Analyst Certification Board, the Missouri Association for Behavior Analysis, and the Mid-American Association for Behavior Analysis. Dr. Kahng is the recipient of the 2003 B.F. Skinner New Researcher Award given by Division 25 of the American Psychological Association. Dr. Kahng has co-authored over 70 peer reviewed articles and chapters. The focus of his research and clinical work has been on assessing and treating behaviors exhibited by individuals with developmental disabilities. He is also interested in a broader research agenda, which includes topics related to obesity and aging. Finally, he has mentored numerous undergraduate, master's level, and predoctoral students as well as post-doctoral fellows.

- 10:00 **Title: Behavior Analysis and the Psychology of Climate Change *BACB*APA***
Cynthia J. Pietras, Ph.D., Western Michigan University

Abstract: Scientists continue to warn the public about the grave dangers posed by a warming planet and the role of human behavior in that process. Recent polls find that although a growing proportion of Americans acknowledge the threat of climate change, many still doubt that it is human caused, most do not think that climate change will threaten them personally, and only about a third ever talk about climate change with friends or family (Leiserowitz, Maibach, Roser-Renouf, Feinberg & Rosenthal, 2015). Psychologists have proposed and occasionally researched possible psychological processes -- including verbal and social processes -- that contribute to climate change denial and inaction, and at least three popular books have been published recently on the topic: G. Marshall's *Don't even think about it: Why our brains are wired to ignore climate change*, P.E. Stoknes' *What we think about when we try not to think about global warming*, and A. Hoffman's *How culture shapes the climate change debate*. These authors have taken an eclectic approach, proposing a mix of cognitive, social, and evolutionary reasons why people fail to acknowledge or act on climate

change. Behavior analysts have made limited contributions to the understanding of climate-change denial and inaction. The purpose of this presentation is to review some of the psychological processes that these authors have proposed as causes of climate change denial and inaction, with the goal of identifying ways in which behavior analysts may contribute to this discussion. One initial contribution of behavior analysis may be to provide a consistent and parsimonious framework for analyzing (and ultimately intervening to change) climate-related behaviors.

Dr. Cynthia Pietras is an Associate Professor of Psychology at Western Michigan University. She received her graduate degrees in EAB at the University of Florida and completed her postdoctoral training in Human Psychopharmacology at the University of Texas Health Science Center-Houston. She has or is currently serving on the board of editors for the Journal of the Experimental Analysis of Behavior, The Psychological Record, Behavioural Processes, and The Behavior Analyst, and is serving as Associate Editor for The Analysis of Verbal Behavior and Behavior Analysis: Research and Practice. She has served as president of the Mid-American Association for Behavior Analysis, Program Chair for the Southeastern Association for Behavior Analysis, and is beginning her term on the ABAI Science Board. Her research, which has involved both humans and nonhumans, has focused on choice (including risky and self-control), punishment, avoidance, cooperation and aggression, and drug effects on behavior. She has conceptual interests in verbal behavior and radical behaviorism. Growing concerns about how human behavior is impacting the climate has led her to start examining how behavior analysis can address global warming.

11:00 **MABA Student Paper Symposium *BACB***
Presenters to be announced

12:00 Lunch on your own

1:30 **Title: Conditioned Reinforcement May Not be a Thing *BACB*APA***
Jason C. Bourret, Ph.D., BCBA-D *New England Center for Children*

Abstract: The concept of conditioned reinforcement plays a crucial role in behavior analytic theory. It underlies our interpretation of the action of stimuli like those signaling links in a chain, tokens, praise, money, and attention. A traditional view of conditioned reinforcement portrays the establishment process as an outcome of stimulus-stimulus pairing. However, although conditioned reinforcers may acquire eliciting functions, these are not required for us to conclude that a stimulus has become a conditioned reinforcer. The respondent and operant processes are putatively distinct. How does the establishment of a reinforcing function fit into this stimulus pairing conceptualization? We know that stimuli in chained and token schedules can serve discriminative functions. They can act as both discriminative stimuli and stimuli that signal extinction (in fact, several studies have shown that tokens can have a suppressive effect on responding). Some authors have argued that there may be, in fact, no such thing as conditioned reinforcement and that apparent reinforcement effects are merely the “conditioned reinforcers” acting as discriminative stimuli. I will attempt to shed some light on the empirical findings that have led to these conclusions and provide an interpretation that is coherent with Michael’s (1993) conceptualization of conditioned establishing operations.

Jason Bourret holds a clinical position at the New England Center for Children and a faculty position at Western New England University. He teaches courses on designing treatments for severe problem behavior, verbal behavior, and developing mathematical models of behavior analytic functional relations. Jason also operates a lab in which he and his students attempt to solve some clinical problems while simultaneously indulging their curiosity about behavior. Their research runs a broad gamut of topics including assessment and treatment of problem behavior, verbal behavior, conditioned reinforcement, and quantitative analysis.

2:30 **Title: Assessment-based Instruction for Receptive Identification Training *BACB*APA***
Tiffany Kodak, Ph.D., BCBA-D *University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee*

A fundamental component of many types of tasks is engagement in discriminations among stimuli, such as differentiating between pictures or the sounds in the environment. Discrimination training is typically a high-priority goal in educational programs for individuals with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Auditory-visual (A-V) conditional discriminations are a frequent target of early intervention, during which a child must look at an array of pictures, the adult says something, and the child points at a picture in the array. A-V conditional discrimination training is frequently referred to as receptive identification training in EIBI and among teachers. Despite the importance of

teaching A-V conditional discriminations and the large amount of time focused on teaching these skills during children's special education and EIBI services, there are few assessment procedures that measure specific skills that may be related to performance on A-V conditional discriminations. This presentation will review a skills assessment that measures prerequisite skills for auditory-visual conditional discrimination. In addition, the presentation will describe training procedures to teach missing prerequisite skills. The presentation will end with a discussion of future research on assessment-based instruction and implications for clinical practice.

Dr. Tiffany Kodak is an Assistant Professor in the Experimental Psychology program at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. Dr. Kodak is a licensed psychologist, licensed behavior analyst, and a Board Certified Behavior Analyst-Doctoral (BCBA-D). Dr. Kodak is the Executive Director of the Center for Language Acquisition and Social Skills Intervention, which provides services to children with autism in Ozaukee and the surrounding counties. She is currently an Associate Editor for the *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis* and *Learning and Motivation* and is on the editorial boards of *The Analysis of Verbal Behavior*, *Behavior Analysis in Practice*, and the *Review Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*. Her research interests in the area of early intervention for children with autism spectrum disorder include increasing the efficiency of academic instruction, treatment integrity, assessment-based instruction, verbal behavior, and computer-assisted instruction.

3:30 Title: Eschew Obfuscation: Turning People On to Behavior Analysis with Plain and Simple Language ***BACB*APA***
Patrick C. Friman, Ph.D., ABPP Boys Town

Abstract: The core idea in behavior analysis is that behavior is a function of environmental circumstances, past and present. This is one of the most powerful ideas ever invented by mankind. Unfortunately people outside the field do not know and understand this idea, and so they cannot use it to know and understand their world. Instead they turn to older, weaker, and vastly less powerful ideas, such as that behavior occurs as a function of character, morality, or the psyche. Why? Very simply because they are ignorant; but they are not stupid. Ignorance means lacking information. Stupidity means lacking capacity. They do not lack capacity. They lack information. And the responsibility for providing needed information would seem to fall on those who have it (i.e., that would be behavior analysts). In order to ensure that people outside the field obtain (and can use) the information it has to be in a readily apprehensible form. The technical language of the field is precise and efficient, but it is very far from readily apprehensible, even for persons in the field. Therefore, using it to convey the core idea of the field to those outside it would seem substantially less than effective. This talk will speculate on why this nonetheless continues to happen and how members of the field could reverse this longstanding trend and thereby more effectively bring the core idea of the field to the eyes and ears of the world.

Dr. Patrick C. Friman received his Ph.D. from the University of Kansas. He is the current Vice President of Behavioral Health at Boys Town and a Clinical Professor in the Department of Pediatrics at the University of Nebraska School of Medicine. He was formerly on the faculties of Johns Hopkins University, University of Pennsylvania, and Creighton University Schools of Medicine. He was also formerly the Director of the Clinical Psychology Program at University of Nevada as well as the Associate Chairman of the Department of Psychology. He is the former Editor of the *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis* and former President of the *Association for Behavior Analysis International*. He is currently the Book Review editor for the *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis* and on the editorial boards of six peer reviewed journals. He has published more than 190 scientific articles and chapters and three books. The primary focus of his scientific and clinical work is in the area of Behavioral Pediatrics and Behavioral Medicine. Dr. Friman's work in behavioral pediatrics has concentrated on the gap between primary medical care for children on one side, and referral-based clinical child psychological and psychiatric care, on the other. A secondary focus is on adolescent behavior and development. He also specializes in consultation regarding workplace issues such as motivation, dealing with difficult people, change, happiness and pathways to success.