The Midwestern Association Of Behavior Analysis: Past, Present, Future

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When Scott Wood called to ask that I write the history of MABA for the first publication of *The Behavior Analyst*, I was pleased and honored. The momentary reinforcement was so overwhelming that I pushed all modesty aside and readily accepted. The effects of this reinforcement, however, soon waned as I began the task of compiling the data necessary to complete such an account. The history of MABA's formative years was virtually undocumented, but as MABA grew so did the materials and data with respect to it. With mountains of materials, millions of memos from Malott, and a multitude of minutes from various meetings, I began this arduous task. I have tried to document all events and anecdotal accounts mentioned below, not always successfully. I do believe, however, the article represents the true "spirit" surrounding MABA's beginning and the events that shaped the organization.

The concept of a midwestern association for behavior analysts had been discussed and debated for many years prior to its actual inception in 1974. Perhaps the first discussion occurred in December of 1966 when the Johnson Wax Corporation in Racine, Wisconsin, sponsored a meeting to discuss *Walden Two* and its implications. Some of the individuals attending this meeting were: Dale and Karen Brethower, Howard Farris, Neil Kent, Gerald Mertens, Jack Michael, William Sheppard, B. F. Skinner, Ray Studer, Paul Sullivan, and Roger Ulrich. The idea of behavior analysts¹ meeting regularly to discuss research, behavioral programs, and related topics came up at this conference. That was the first of a series of formal and informal meetings occurring over the next eight years during which the ground work for Midwestern Association of Behavior Analysis was laid.

Initial efforts to organize such a group were characterized by peak periods of high productivity followed by long plateaus. The peaks seemed to occur immediately after meetings at MPA or after conversations between Gerald Mertens and Richard Malott. During the late 60's and early 70's Mertens and Malott were spending a good deal of time on the road — Malott presenting his slide shows, and Mertens conducting his Psychology

Tours. These activities resulted in frequent contacts between them as well as with other professional behaviorists in the Midwest — many of whom were interested in the formation of a behavioral organization. The outcome of such interactions became clearer at the APA regional meetings.

In 1969 Burgess Publishing Company sponsored a two-day session on behavior analysis, personalized system of instruction and contingency management chaired by Mertens. The meeting was held at the Midwestern Psychological Association in an effort to supplement behaviorally the MPA program. The topic was soon shifted, however, to a more urgent need: improving the behavioral orientation in MPA. In contrast with other regional associations, little behavioral research of the sort currently published in *JEAB* and *JABA*, was being accepted or presented at MPA. The organization of a behavioral group in the Midwest certainly seemed overdue. In 1971, a full day's program on behavioral education methodology was conducted at the MPA meeting in Detroit, again chaired by Mertens. This "open meeting" also focused on the topic of organizing a behavioral group in the Midwest.

Although the years prior to MABA's first meeting are historically sketchy, it is clear that conversations and meetings at APA and MPA definitely shaped the beginning of MABA. Moreover, MPA's reluctance to take an active role in the development of the rapidly expanding area of operant conditioning as an important discipline within psychology served as a further impetus for MABA. MPA continually proved to be an inefficient mechanism for behavior analysts to exchange and report research interests.

These difficulties eventually led to the development of an independent behavioral movement within MPA. This took two forms. First, there was an attempt to encourage persons with a behavioral

¹I use the terms "behavior analyst", "behaviorist", "behavioral", etc. in the restricted sense of the orientation most directly related to B.F. Skinner and characterizing the work currently published in the *Journal of the Experimental Analysis of Behavior (JEAB)* and the *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis (JABA)*.

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orientation to become more active in MPA's governing body. Gerald Mertens led this campaign. Getting people to run for office was not the only task; prompting members of MPA with a behavioral orientation to put aside their pessimism, rally behind the movement, and vote, was also essential. This often meant that ex-MPA members had to re-apply for membership. The first formal attempt to get a behaviorist to run for elections came in 1973, when James Dinsmoor was elected as a member of the council. In 1974, probably the year when behavior analysts had the most strength in MPA, Nathan Azrin was elected President, Sidney Bijou was elected council member and James Dinsmoor was serving his second year in office.

In addition to his "political" approach, Mertens and other behaviorists decided to hold their own conference in conjunction with MPA. A survey taken in the latter part of 1973 was sent to persons in MPA who might have preferred an alternative behavioral meeting to the MPA convention. The response was overwhelmingly supportive of efforts to provide better behavioral representation at MPA. The site of the conference was to be the Chicago Conrad Hilton where MPA was meeting; however, room scheduling problems and costs forced the small group to look elsewhere.

In the first months of 1974, Israel Goldiamond was finally able to secure the University of Chicago Billing's Hospital Auditorium.

A letter went out in April to approximately 50 people which included the following: "... we have been able to finalize the proposed alternative meeting of the Midwest Society of the Experimental Analysis of Behavior.² The meeting has been set for May 2 and 3." This memo was accompanied by a schedule of the sessions and confirmed speakers.

The 1974 Meeting

On May 2, 1974, approximately 90 persons interested in a behavioral alternative to MPA gathered at Billing's Hospital Auditorium. The two day conference consisted of the following presentations:

Organization Meeting

Midwestern Experimental Analysis of Behavior Group

Thursday, May 2

10:00 a.m. Welcome to Chicago and the
Behavioral Happenings in
Chicago
Coordinator-Israel Goldiamond

11:00 a.m. Business meeting (part #1)
12:00 p.m. Lunch break
1:00 p.m. Indiana University Happenings
Coordinator-Richard Sanders
3:00 p.m. University of Illinois
Coordinator-Sidney Bijou
4:00 p.m. Fort Custer
Coordinator-Ron Hutchinson

Friday, May 3

10:00 a.m. Business Meeting (part #2)
11:00 a.m. Western Michigan University
Coordinator-Frederick Gault
12:00 p.m. Lunch break
1:00 p.m. Experimental Communes
Coordinator-Roger Ulrich
2:00 p.m. Behavior Mod in Minnesota
Coordinator-Gerald Mertens
3:00 p.m. Institute for Behavior Research
Happenings
Coordinator-Harold Cohen
4:00 p.m. Drake University
Coordinator-Kenneth Lloyd

Perhaps the most interesting event of the May convention was the outcome of the business meeting held on May 3rd, 1974.

1. The persons attending this meeting decided to meet again the next year, May 1-3, concurrently with the Midwestern Psychological Association in Chicago.

2. The name was changed to the Midwestern Analysis of Behavior Association.

3. Individuals were assigned tasks to facilitate the 1975 meeting.

Gerald Mertens was appointed General Coordinator. Israel Goldiamond was appointed to draft the organization's constitution. Other assignments included Kenneth Lloyd as Chairperson of the Paper Selection Committee, Arthur Schwartz to handle local arrangements, and James Dinsmoor as the MPA liason. The following persons were to be planning representatives from their school or area: Sidney Bijou — University of Illinois, James Dinsmoor — Indiana University, Israel Gol-

²In the early months of 1974 the behavioral group forming was designated the Midwest Society of the Experimental Analysis of Behavior. A letter received in early March by Victor Laties suggested a name change. Laties wrote: "I would like to urge you, however, to choose another name for your society. I am afraid that you will produce great confusion in the minds of many if you incorporate 'Society of the Experimental Analysis of Behavior' in your name, since that is almost precisely the same as 'Society for the Experimental Analysis of Behavior' which is the corporation that publishes *JEAB* and *JABA*". (This was the first of three changes in the association's title).

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diamond — University of Chicago, Bill Hopkins — University of Kansas, Neil Kent — Western Michigan University, Kenneth Lloyd — Drake University, Roger Poppen — Southern Illinois University.

4. An Organizational Committee was formally approved consisting of Sidney Bijou, James Dinsmoor, Israel Goldiamond, Bill Hopkins, Neil Kent, Kenneth Lloyd, Richard Malott, Gerald Mertens, Jack Michael, Roger Ulrich, and Scott Wood.

Since there were many issues to be discussed at the business meeting, most were only briefly covered. Thus, on the evening of May 3rd a group of persons met in the APA Division 25 Hospitality Suite at the Hilton to cover in more detail one particular agenda item. Dinsmoor, Kent, Malott, Mertens and Wood met with one of the MPA Officers. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the appointment of a person to the vacant position on the MPA Program Committee. It was hoped that this position would be filled by a behavioral psychologist and thus open the door to more behavioral representation in the MPA program. In a spirit of compromise, the MPA Representative offered to appoint a "maze psychologist" for the position. Although meant as a concession to appease the behavioral front, Kent — amazed by the term — replied, "I don't know anyone who still calls anybody a 'maze psychologist'." Later that evening Kent was reportedly seen sitting on the sofa in the hospitality suite with drink in hand, shaking his head and muttering, "A maze psychologist?"

Preparation for the 1975 Convention

The focus of Mertens' activities after the initial meeting in Chicago was to organize the work of the representatives throughout the Midwest. However, money was not available at St. Cloud, or any other university, to handle the cost of organizing the upcoming convention. MABA's future depended upon support from its members. How large this constituency was and would be remained an important question to many.

It was at this point that I became more actively involved with MABA. I was then graduating from St. Cloud State University and was soon to begin my graduate training at Western Michigan University (WMU). I had worked toward the development of MABA over the previous year and so was very interested in maintaining this involve-

ment. Kent agreed to oversee an independent study so that I could receive course credit while pursuing my MABA interests. Our task was to take charge of all mailings and correspondence. We were to prepare the announcement of the upcoming meeting, coordinate the program booklet activities, organize the advertising campaign, and interact with the hotel on last minute arrangements. Mertens was responsible for soliciting financial support (advertisements for the program booklet, and arranging for exhibitors), organizing the membership, and making hotel arrangements.

The first announcement was distributed at the Association for the Advancement of Behavior Therapy (AABT) Convention in Chicago in the Winter of 1974. "The first major meeting of the Midwest Association of Behavior Analysis³ will be held May 1st, 2nd, and 3rd, at the Blackstone Hotel in Chicago. This will be concurrent with the Midwestern Psychological Association meeting to be held across the street at the Conrad Hilton. The purpose of the meeting is to provide an interdisciplinary forum for people interested in all aspects of behavior analysis. For several years people have attempted to obtain adequate representation at MPA. Failing to do this, they typically presented papers at other regional meetings. MABA is intended to be a solution to this problem plus provide a meeting place for behavior oriented non-psychologists."

To many, this announcement was viewed as a formal commitment by a number of persons to ensure that the 1975 convention was a reality. At the AABT meeting in Chicago, the group of planning representatives met in Kent's hotel room to discuss the following year's program. Approximately 30 names were suggested as potential invited speakers. Each person in the room was given two or three names to contact from the list.

Organizing the first meeting proved to be quite a task. Lack of funds seemed the most obvious problem, and trying to coordinate all of the MABA-related activities at the different centers led to much duplication of effort and general confusion. Paper abstracts were to be sent to Kenneth Lloyd, Gerald Mertens or Neil Kent. This arrangement later proved to be a problem of major proportions. Lloyd was to approve and organize the papers and then schedule them — Kent and I were to organize

³The second time the title of the association was changed. No records are available indicating precisely when this change occurred.

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and schedule the invited speaker list and then coordinate it with Lloyd's schedule. With approximately 750 kilometers separating Drake and Western, one can imagine the margin of error we had to allow!

The MABA Convention activities at Western soon began to multiply. At the request of Kent and Mertens, Richard Malott became active in the mechanics of running the 1975 convention. A system was created. Weekly meetings were held. The persons attending the meetings were soon called the members of the MABA Coordinating Committee. Neil Kent, Richard Malott, Jack Michael, Arthur Snapper, and I served on the committee, along with David Burchell, our consultant on business matters. Although in retrospect it is difficult to list all the activities that the committee engaged in, I can remember many hours spent discussing them!

Perhaps the best example of the chaos that characterized the period occurred only one month prior to the convention. The papers submitted for presentation had been sent to three different locations. Three abstracts of each paper were requested so that Lloyd, Kent and Mertens would each have a copy. Forwarding the copies and receiving them became very difficult to coordinate, but with only a few mishaps the system seemed to run smoothly. However, our scheduled time-line for the program booklet became less and less a controlling factor, and before we realized it, the convention was only a month away. Fortunately, Mertens had scheduled a Psychological Tour of the Midwestern behavioral centers and universities for some of the students at St. Cloud in March of 1975. The trip soon turned into a mission for coordinating everyone's efforts related to the MABA program. Much of Mertens' time on that tour was spent confirming invited speakers, getting titles of their papers, and finding chairpersons for all of the different presentations to be scheduled. When the tour finally landed in Des Moines, Lloyd was in the process of finalizing the scheduling of close to 150 papers. With Mertens' help they were able to finish that evening. The scheduled papers were well organized and categorized. Mertens called me at around 10:00 p.m. to read over the phone the entire three day schedule. This meant writing down first author, and sometimes second, third, and fourth; affiliations of each; and the paper, symposia, workshop, or conversation hour title. At approximately 1:00 a.m., unable to write any further, I convinced another graduate student at Western to finish the task. Jane Howard received a call from Mertens around 1:10

a.m. and wrote until close to 4:00 a.m. By these somewhat dubious means, the scheduled program was now at one place. (Only the authors of the many different presentations know the exact number of errors in the 1975 program booklet!) The following day Jane and I, with the help of a number of other students, typed the draft of the booklet. At the same time approximately 70 long distance phone calls⁴ were made to invited speakers to confirm their titles, times and dates.

Within three days the booklet was at the composer's. The following week I was able to pick up the camera-ready copy; and with some arguing and two six packs of beer, was able to coerce Will Ellis (having skills with the psychology department's printing press) to run off the first 500 booklets between 11:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m., despite the occasional breakdown of the printing press. Kent picked up the completed booklets and drove them to a printing company so that they could be collated, stapled and trimmed. They said they could finish them within three days — which meant we could have them by the second day of the convention! With some arguing Kent was able to pick them up on April 30th on his way to MABA.

In spite of all these last minute adjustments, the meeting was a great success. I can remember that in late fall, as Kent and I met to discuss the 1975 convention, the estimated number of persons attending the convention was set at a generous but hopeful 200. By February, with the onslaught of submitted papers, our calculations were revised — maybe 500. By the time the convention closed, there had been approximately 1000 persons in attendance. MABA's future indeed looked bright.

The 1975 Convention

At the close of the 1975 convention there had been approximately 95 papers, 26 symposia, 14 workshops, and 20 invited speakers. The presentations covered a wide variety of applied topics, but quite important, the experimental area was also well represented. Some of the noteworthy speakers were Nathan Azrin, Donald Baer, Sidney Bijou, James Dinsmoor, Siegfried Englemann, Israel Goldiamond, Ronald Hutchinson, Ogden Lindsley, Richard Malott, Reed Martin, Jack Michael, William Schoenfeld, Charles Schuster, and Travis

⁴A special thanks must go to Howard Farris for abdicating all rights to his office during that hectic time period — without his "open door" policy we would have never completed the program booklet let alone our deadline.

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Thompson. But once again, The MABA Organizational Committee Meeting held at the convention on May 3rd proved to be the event that cemented MABA's foundation and gave direction to its future.

The highlights of this meeting included:

1. The dates of the 1976 convention were set for May 8, 9, and 10, 1976.
2. The Program Co-Chairpersons for 1976 were appointed: Kenneth Lloyd — Applied Analysis; Elsie Pinkston — related areas; and Arthur Snapper — Experimental Analysis.
3. The Committee formally established the MABA Coordinating Committee to be chaired by Richard Malott and Margaret Peterson. This committee would be responsible for the planning and preparation of the 1976 convention and issues related to the establishment of a formal association.
4. The Coordinating Committee gained approval to solicit personal loans from the Organizational Committee members, so as to facilitate MABA'S financial security.
5. The Coordinating Committee was asked to formally poll MABA convention registrants regarding the issues of designing and approving the MABA by-laws, even though formal membership could not be established until the by-laws, were approved.
6. The Organizational Committee approved the appointment of five women to their committee: Victoria Azrin, Ann Kocer, Judith LeBlanc, Lynn McClannahan, and Elsie Pinkston. Nathan Azrin was asked to serve on the committee by the members attending the meeting.

These notes, although informative, perhaps do not impart the true "spirit" of the Organizational Committee Meeting that was held on the last day of the convention. The two most striking features of that meeting were that MABA was to hold its next convention in tandem rather than concurrent with MPA, and Gerald Mertens resigned as coordinator of MABA.

The decision to break with MPA was based on the fact that we could not secure hotel accommodations at the same time that MPA was to meet, and from data collected at the convention, few persons attended both meetings. Furthermore, many persons at this meeting felt little was to be gained by running MABA and MPA concurrently. MPA was unmoved by our requests for behavioral representation; moreover, Mertens' request for a "Joint Session Status" with MPA for the 1975 meeting was rejected. The rejection came in the

form of a document entitled — "The Guidelines for Organizations Wanting to Meet Jointly with MPA, Inc." In essence, MPA wanted complete censorship rights to all sessions MABA wished to hold or schedule.

There were others at this meeting, however, who still felt strongly about continuing the efforts for MPA support. After much intense debate, the Organizational Committee moved to establish MABA as an independent organization. The Coordinating Committee at Western was to begin the process of incorporating MABA and pursuing non-profit status.

For these reasons, Mertens decided to resign as Coordinator of MABA. This was a set-back for the organization, as MABA had relied heavily upon Mertens' pursuit of a unified behavioral group and his high rate of responding in organizing the 1975 convention. But Mertens' feelings about the group remaining with MPA were strong and arguments by others did not persuade him otherwise. In the Post-Convention Notes sent out by Mertens in late May, he wrote: "I believe MABA is in excellent shape and I have decided to give up my MABA roles as coordinator of the organizational committee, treasurer, and member of the committee. Margaret Peterson and Richard Malott will take over as coordinators of the committee. MABA is in good hands and is here to stay as a strong forum for behavior analysis in the Midwest. I think the time which I have available would be better spent in an original interest of mine, to attempt, with others, to directly influence MPA. I certainly do not see this as an effort to fraction, cause conflict, or weaken MABA in any way. However, I want to stay in and have an active input in the affairs of MPA."

Preparation for the 1976 Convention

The decisions made at the Organizational Committee meeting in May outlined the direction MABA was to take in becoming an independent organization. There appeared to be five major tasks that would provide the foundation of the new organization: the adoption of by-laws; the statement of goals and objectives; the establishment of a membership; the initial election of officers; and finally, the development of a secure financial base.

Adoption of By-laws

Gerald Mertens' first draft of the by-laws was sent out along with the Post Convention Notes in May of 1975. The recipients were asked to com-

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ment on these by-laws and then return them. This feedback was forwarded to the Coordinating Committee (consisting of: Amy Barmeier, Jane Howard, Brian Iwata, Neil Kent, Ann Kocer, Richard Malott, Jack Michael, Margaret Peterson, Norman Peterson and Arthur Snapper) so that they could begin the task of designing a final draft. On July 2nd, 1975, the entire Coordinating Committee meeting was spent reviewing the suggestions made, as well as reviewing the by-laws of comparable organizations. At the close of the meeting it was recommended that the MPA By-laws, with some modifications, be adopted by MABA. These revised by-laws were then sent to the members of the Organizational Committee for any final suggestions or modifications. Scott Wood responded to this request by indicating some concern over Article III of the by-laws — Membership. He proposed that an initial screening committee be appointed by the Organizational Committee to discuss the ramifications of the different levels of criteria, and to establish a means by which initial members would be determined.

Wood arrived in Kalamazoo on the 19th of August and spent the next several days consulting with different lawyers on the legal implications of such a document. It was soon determined that for purposes of incorporation, the by-laws needed to be approved by a defined membership prior to the next MABA Convention. At the next Coordinating Committee meeting, the members recommended to the Organizational Committee that the initial membership consist of the Organizational Committee members, until the Initial Screening Committee became operational. This measure was viewed as a means to expedite the process of MABA becoming incorporated without having to hastily define membership criteria.⁵

In this way the by-laws could be voted on by the Organizational Committee, and then amended if necessary by the more complete membership once it was established.

With a few revisions the by-laws were approved on the 31st of August when the Organizational Committee met in Chicago. The recommended revisions were as follows:

1. The Secretary-Treasurer would be Council appointed.
2. The Council membership structure would be rewritten to insure that experimental behavior analysts and non-psychologists would always be represented.
3. The membership eligibility section would

specify membership determined by the action of an Initial Screening Committee with the final approval of the Organizational Committee. This action followed a formal vote rejecting an "open" initial membership concept. The Initial Screening Committee, consisting of Israel Goldiamond, Margaret Peterson, Elsie Pinkston, and Scott Wood was then appointed by the Organizational Committee.

After the meeting in August, Wood returned to Des Moines to revise the by-laws in accordance with the action taken at the Organizational Committee meeting. The by-laws were once again sent to MABA's lawyer for legal sanction. With his "go ahead," the Organizational Committee members gave their final approval of the document in early November, 1975.

Adoption of Membership Criteria

When the Organizational Committee approved the by-laws, Article III — Membership Criteria — had yet to be stated. This section, however, had to be legally approved before proceeding with the application for non-profit status for the organization.

The mechanics by which the membership criteria were established proved to be quite complex. At the Coordinating Committee meeting on the 10th of September, a report was given on the progress of the Initial Screening Committee's preliminary activities. Their plans were to send a letter to all of the training programs in the Midwest with a questionnaire pertaining to different levels of qualifications that might be adopted as membership criteria. The recipients of the questionnaire were to respond to each criterion by marking it "acceptable," "questionable," or "completely unacceptable."

The questionnaire went out in late December, 1975, with a meeting scheduled for the Initial Screening Committee to review the returned questionnaires, and thus draw up a proposal on membership criteria. The meeting was scheduled for the 12th of February in Chicago.

The proposed membership criteria were sent to the Organizational Committee members the first week of March, 1976. By April nine persons on the committee had voted "yes" and four "no".

The objections to the proposed membership criteria dealt with the possibility that the criteria were too stringent in that no provisions were made for persons who received a degree in a field other than behavior analysis but who were very active in the area. These concerns were sent to Wood, who

⁵This recommendation proved to be important again, when the first election of MABA Officers was held.

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revised the initial proposal so as to allow such persons membership status. The proposed membership criteria were once again brought before the Organizational Committee. The final policy was approved by this committee at its last formal meeting on May 1st, 1976.

Election of Officers

The first election of MABA Officers turned out to be a "Catch Twenty-Two." The by-laws required that the nominees for election be members of the organization; however, membership could not be defined until the membership criteria were specified in the by-laws and the entire document approved by a defined membership. Once again, the Organizational Committee's only recourse was to list the members of that committee as the initial membership. Moreover, the election had to take place prior to the first meeting of the newly incorporated association in order to avoid reapplication for non-profit status. With the difficulties involved in outlining the membership requirements and getting the Organizational Committee's approval of such requirements, time grew short and an election had to be held.

It was first suggested that an interim committee be appointed to the MABA Council positions specified in the by-laws; however, once these by-laws were legally approved, it became clear that a formal election was necessary. Thus, the Organizational Committee nominated and voted in six of their members to the MABA Council.

Nominations for the offices of President, President-Elect, and three Council members were received in early April. The election was conducted in the same month. The results were first announced at the MABA Organizational Committee meeting May 1st, 1976. At this time the Organizational Committee disbanded, and the new officers assumed their positions. Nathan Azrin was elected MABA's first President; Israel Goldiamond, President-Elect; Arthur Snapper, Experimental council member; Elsie Pinkston, Non-Psychology member, and Scott Wood was elected Council member. Since the by-laws required that council member elections be staggered to allow only one vacant position each year, the length of term for each council position was also voted on. The non-psychology position would be up for reelection in one year; the experimental council position, two years; the other council position in three years. This procedure was used for the initial election only; length of term after this was three years for each council position.

Adoption of Goals and Objectives

At the Organizational Committee meeting in August, 1975, the relationship between MABA and MPA, as well as MABA and AABT was discussed. It was again suggested that MABA consider incorporating with AABT or MPA. The topic was deferred, however, until MABA was more completely formed with definite objectives.

This issue of MABA's purpose again arose in early October when the Coordinating Committee discussed paper selection for the convention. There was some concern about duplication and competition with AABT. The committee drafted a letter discussing the policy for paper selection and sent it to the Organizational Committee for acceptance or rejection. The proposed policy suggested, "The majority of the papers, symposia, and workshops at MABA should deal with the source of material particularly associated with *JEAB*, *JABA*, Division 25 of APA, and any other groups or organizations that have a main emphasis toward a general behavioral systems orientation. In addition, a small number of papers dealing with behavior therapy that are of interest to the general MABA audience may be accepted."

The statement on MABA's paper selection, however, did not completely resolve the controversy concerning MABA's function. Still, MABA needed a list of goals and objectives to complete the process of its incorporation, as well as to define its purpose. When Mertens had reviewed different by-laws that might be appropriate for MABA's adoption, he had also prepared a list of MABA objectives. The Coordinating Committee reviewed and revised these objectives and distributed them to all members of the Organizational Committee. It was thought that this document would serve two functions: it could be sent to prospective MABA members as guidelines of the organization, and; it could be used to supplement Article II of the by-laws — Purpose of the Organization. Using the feedback from the Organizational Committee, the Coordinating Committee again revised the objectives and sent them to the Organizational Committee for final approval in early November, 1975. The MABA Goals and Objectives approved by the Organizational Committee by mail in January of 1976 were as follows:

1. To promote the continuing development of experimental and applied analysis of behavior;
2. To promote the acquisition of information needed to apply behavioral principles;
3. To promote education for those desirous of

using behavioral techniques in appropriate settings;

4. To provide an opportunity for experimentation, discussion, and consensus before public statements are rendered on issues of recognized mutual concern;

5. To encourage research by its members; and

6. To promote the concept of an open forum for information exchange.

Initial Attempts Toward Financial Security

Although many changes took place in MABA between the 1974 and 1975 Conventions, MABA's financial status was not among them. At the close of the 1975 Convention, MABA had approximately \$2,000.00 to begin preparation for the 1976 Convention. Clearly the most urgent need facing the organization was to become financially solvent. MABA needed approximately \$30,000.00 to run the following year's convention. The only sources of revenue that appeared available were: exhibits at the convention, advertisement in the program booklet, convention registration fees, and solicitation of personal loans from members of the Organizational Committee.

In early August the Coordinating Committee became involved in the mechanics of contacting persons and companies that might be interested in exhibiting or advertising their books, apparatus, etc. to the MABA audience. The campaign was a success. Nine advertisements for the program booklet were secured, and at the 1976 Convention, there were eight exhibitors and five book companies that participated in the co-op book exhibit.

The increase in registration fees was discussed at length during the Organizational Committee meeting of the 1975 Convention. The increase was inevitable; the question was, "How much?" A cost analysis of the 1976 Convention led to a fee structure that was approved by the Organizational Committee members. The fee structure that was approved proposed that registration fees be \$20.00 and \$10.00 for students.

The solicitation of loans from members of the Organizational Committee was first discussed at the May 3rd Organizational Committee meeting in 1975. At this time the committee approved such a measure to help MABA cover the immediate costs incurred through the preparation of the 1976 Convention. A letter was sent in early fall of 1975 to approximately 30 persons. With the help of seven loans of \$500.00 each, MABA 1976 became more than just a hope.

These four sources of income definitely helped finance the 1976 Convention. The revenue from

these sources was not received, however, until the early part of 1976. Almost three-fourths of the convention costs were incurred during fall and winter of 1975. To help MABA avoid deficit spending, the Psychology Department at Western Michigan University stepped in. All costs that MABA could incur through the department, e.g., postage, phone calls, paper, secretarial help, printing, etc. were paid for by the department. In this way MABA could wait until it became more financially secure before reimbursing the department for these initial costs. In retrospect, it is unclear how MABA could have functioned during those lean years without the generous help from the WMU Psychology Department.

In reviewing the minutes of the Coordinating Committee meetings held during 1975, one source of income has yet to be mentioned — Arthur Snapper. At the request of Malott on October 1st, 1975, the Coordinating Committee enacted the following attendance and tardiness policy: "Any member of the Coordinating Committee who is more than five minutes late or fails to attend a meeting, when they are in town, will be fined \$1.00 which can be paid at the meeting or the next meeting they attend. These fines would go into the MABA fund." The passage of this motion was narrow. Had Snapper been on time, I believe the motion would have been voted down. When the minutes of this meeting were sent to the Organizational Committee members, Kenneth Lloyd responded to this motion by extending sympathy to those who had tried in vain to vote down the motion, and by sending the committee a one dollar bill — to be used for the first offender. That one dollar bill covered the only fine that Snapper did not have to pay.

The 1976 Convention

During 1975 the Coordinating Committee — along with one paid staff member, David Agopian — was indeed active. The activities mentioned above dealt most specifically with the establishment of the organization; however, preparation of the 1976 Convention was being handled concurrently. A list of the activities will give a good idea as to the tasks necessary for a smoothly run 1976 Convention. Smooth, it wasn't, but with a growing MABA staff, all but one of whom were volunteers, they were able to secure exhibitors and advertisers, design and mail the call for papers, design and mail the pre-convention announcement, organize and schedule the papers submitted, contact and

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schedule the invited speakers, advertise the convention, secure press coverage, establish a job placement service, organize film presentations, organize the Skinner-Keller Dinner, handle hotel arrangements, organize a MABA mailing list . . .

In all respects, the 1976 MABA Convention was a success. The scheduled program of events contained close to 300 papers, 40 symposia, 30 workshops, and 70 invited speakers! The attendance at this convention reached 1,250. Some of the most popular events (determined by attendance data collected at the convention) included presentations by: Beth Sulzer-Azaroff, Sidney Bijou, Jacob Kantor, Jack Michael, Travis Thompson, and Donald Whaley. The most outstanding event was the Skinner-Keller dinner with over 500 persons attending.

The MABA business affairs at the convention also proved interesting. The last formal meeting of the Organizational Committee was held on the 1st of May. Two days later the business meeting was held to cover the issues that the Organizational Committee members had been working on over the past year, as well as to give direction to the newly incorporated organization. The announcements at this meeting included the results of the 1976 election of MABA officers and the appointment of chairs to the three standing committees of MABA. Jon Krapfl was appointed chair of the Education and Evaluation Committee, David Born and Donald Baer to the Membership Committee, and Brian Iwata to the Program Committee. Israel Goldiamond presented the membership policy as drawn up by the Initial Screening Committee and approved by the Organizational Committee. Scott Wood presented the preliminary motions concerning a MABA Journal, also approved by the Organizational Committee.

The first formal meetings of the MABA Council, held on May 3rd and 4th, dealt almost exclusively with the affiliate population and their role in MABA. Perhaps the most outstanding resolution at these meetings was the Council's unanimous consensus that affiliate representatives sit in on the council meetings. David Agopian and Janet Stephens were accepted by the Council as these representatives and were designated Co-Chairs for the newly formed ad hoc committee on Affiliate Involvement. In addition, two more ad hoc committee's were established — the Journal Committee, Co-Chaired by Judith LeBlanc and Scott Wood, and the Interests of Special Classes of Membership to be chaired by Elsie Pinkston.

One of the most noteworthy aspects of the 1976 Convention was the fact that it was run almost exclusively by student volunteers. Without their invaluable service, MABA 1975 and '76 would not have happened. The organization was taking on a unique feature — MABA was becoming an organization that was not only shaped by professionals but also by the concerns and interests of students not yet in a position that typically allows participation in the growth of a profession.

Preparation for the 1977 Convention

With an expanding program, an increasing membership, but with little money in the bank, the newly elected officers and appointed chairs had their job cut out for them — making 1976 the year of financial independence. The activities of the Coordinating Committee (Amy Barmeier, Brian Iwata, Paul Knight, Richard Malott, Jack Michael, Margaret Peterson, Norman Peterson and Arthur Snapper) and the MABA Staff (now consisting of three paid staff members: Robert Haynes, Linda Parrott and Nedra Zerbel) also suggest that the major thrust of 1976 was the development of a sound economic base for MABA.

The MABA Council met in Chicago on May 29th, 1976, to help prepare for the 1977 Convention and to discuss any business matters related to the organization. Three important resolutions were made: the establishment of six Ad Hoc Committees, the approval of the MABA membership fee structure, and the Council members' commitment to help solicit sustaining membership.

Ad Hoc Committees

The committees established at this meeting illustrated the concern of the Council and the direction MABA was to take. They were:

1. Chicago Involvement Committee — to solicit behaviorally oriented professionals within the Chicago area who would be interested in the presentations at MABA. Chaired by Evelyn Ginsburg.
2. Training and Professional Ethics Committee — to draw up a code of ethical guidelines for the organization. Chaired by Roger Poppen.
3. Contact with Other Organizations Committee — to involve people from different universities and settings to work with various MABA interest groups. Chaired by Eugene Rosenthal.
4. Professional Development of Women in Behavior Analysis — to facilitate female involvement in MABA and in the field. Co-chaired by Gladys Baxley and Lynn McClannahan.

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5. Professional Development of Blacks in Behavior Analysis — to promote minority participation within the organization as well as the field. Chaired by Prentiss Jackson.

Membership Fee Structure

As the 1976 fiscal year ended, MABA had approximately \$2,500.00 for continuing operation of the organization and for preparation of the 1977 Convention. The status of Finances had not improved over 1975, and in 1976 MABA faced a growing number of costs related to its expansion. The establishment of the MABA membership fee structure seemed to be the only answer for an organization just barely able to keep financially afloat. The fee structure submitted to the Council on May 29th, would help cover current convention costs and all expenses to be incurred over the following months until income from the upcoming convention would be secured. This issue was not resolved easily, however by the end of the meeting the proposal had been approved by the Council.

A call for membership was first made at the 1976 Convention. In the months that followed, a number of mass mailings — most notably, the *MABA Report* and the Call for Papers — were sent to persons who had attended MABA. The campaign was successful. By convention time MABA had over 1,200 applications for membership.

Sustaining Membership

Simultaneous with the membership advertising campaign was the solicitation of sustaining members. Sustaining membership was a category approved by the Council which would allow persons to contribute money over and above the costs of membership. Each Council member offered to contact a few friends who might be interested in helping to put MABA on better financial footing. In addition, the Coordinating Committee wrote to apparatus, pharmaceutical and book companies, as well as to universities and organizations. The letter soliciting Sustaining Membership went out in early August. By the 1977 Convention thirty-seven persons had contributed to give MABA close to \$4,000.00. These contributions kept MABA from deficit spending and allowed "MABA '77" to be a reality.

As the organization broadened its base and moved toward financial security, preparation for the 1977 Convention was also being undertaken. Perhaps the most exciting advances made by the organization over the 1976-1977 year were: changes

in the paper presentation format, groundwork for the MABA Journal, the specified goals of the Committee on Education and Evaluation, and the addition of numerous special events to occur at the 1977 Convention.

Program Committee

In the *MABA Report*, sent out in August, Brian Iwata and Arthur Snapper made the following announcement: "In order to enhance the interaction between presenter and audience, and to reduce some congestion in the schedule, we are planning a major change in the format of the paper presentation. The mechanics of traditional paper sessions necessitate extremely tight and concurrent scheduling of a large number of papers for brief periods of time. This means that the presenter is usually allowed to say only about a third as much as would be desired, and the audience does not have adequate opportunity to ask questions, or cannot attend concurrently scheduled sessions. Recently, several major professional organizations have incorporated the poster session quite successfully into their convention program." Although a drastic departure from the traditional format, the poster sessions were in fact a huge success. Close to 400 persons presented posters, as compared to 300 paper presentations the year before. The time and effort volunteered by Program Committee members to organize and design this new format certainly was to the benefit of everyone who attended "MABA '77".

Journal Committee

The Journal Committee did not meet with as much success. At the 1976 Convention, the MABA Council designated the *Behavior Analyst* as the official organ of the organization. It was approved that this journal would publish minutes of the annual business meeting and reports of the President, Secretary-Treasurer and the various committees, as well as publishing lists of officers and committees and lists of new members and affiliates. Articles of a theoretical and professional nature would also be included in the journal along with other reports that the Council deemed appropriate. In other words, the *Behavior Analyst* was not to be viewed as competition with other existing research journals which have substantially contributed to the literature of behavior analysis. The *Behavior Analyst* would be similar to the *American Psychologist*. The purpose of the journal was clear, but finding suitable support to cover the costs of

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such a journal proved to be all but impossible. Printing costs were too high, and the publishers contacted had refused to underwrite costs of the first issue on the grounds that new journals were not selling well. Wood and LeBlanc, Co-Editors of the newly established journal, continued to examine other sources of support while reviewing possible articles for the first issue. After a year of writing letters, making phone calls and pursuing every lead, it became clear that MABA would have to fund its journal from its own revenue if there was to be a journal. This issue was raised again at the Council meeting in May of 1977, however, no decision was reached.

Education and Evaluation Committee

At the Council meeting on May 29th, 1976, Jon Krapfl, Chair of the Education and Evaluation Committee, asked for clarification as to the direction this committee was to take. Along with the purpose of setting criteria for membership admission, Krapfl suggested that one other function of this Committee might be to consider the issue of licensing and certification. The Council approved with full support Krapfl's suggestion. The Education and Evaluation Committee over the next year drew up suggested policy guidelines on how MABA as an organization could respond to the question of licensing and certification. The suggested recommendations came at the Council meeting held on May 16th, 1977.

Special Events

In addition to all of the tasks necessary to prepare for the 1977 Convention (similar to those listed for 1976), the Coordinating Committee found themselves frequently confronted with the issue of special events and what they should consist of. Organized by Malott, the scheduled special events were beginning to take on the characteristics of a four-day experiment in group living. Having activities planned for every hour of the day seemed reasonable, but when Malott began to suggest possible activities his support waned. When Malott first suggested a MABA Jogging Marathon (initially suggested by Scott Wood and Victoria Grochocinski) the Committee was amused but approving. When Malott pushed for the First Annual Behavioral Boogie, the Committee began to get nervous. When Malott asked for a special event called the Behavioral Performing Arts, the Committee agreed but wanted nothing to do with it. When Malott pushed for a few behavioral animal

acts, the Committee finally voted no. Malott's response to the Committee's rejection indicated that the veto did not function as punishment. In fact, two days prior to the 1977 Convention, Malott called to ask that I contact a few costume shops to find a pigeon outfit. His idea was to have someone dressed as a pigeon passing out M&M's during registration hours to keep the dreaded event more "spiritually uplifting." Luckily, time did not permit the organization of this "special event." Although at times the Committee could not have functioned *without* Malott, at other times the Committee didn't know what to do *with* him.

1977 Convention

The program for the 1977 Convention included approximately 550 events, compared to 440 events at the 1976 Convention. Invited presentations totaled over 100 with close to 400 poster presentations. Most important, there was a substantial number of presentations in the basic experimental area — enough for a continuous series of events on basic research programmed throughout the four days of the convention.

The poster sessions were evaluated by presenters as well as the audience attending the sessions. The results were quite encouraging — 87% of the presenters and 82% of the audience rated poster sessions either "better" or "much better" than the traditional paper sessions.

By convention time, MABA had 1,190 members; 646 of these were affiliates, and 63% of the affiliates were students. Members came from over 42 different states and five foreign countries with 65% of the members residing in the Midwest.

Again, the MABA Business Meeting minutes provided the most information with regard to the direction MABA was taking.

1. The first Council election put before the membership occurred in early 1977. The results of this election were first announced at this meeting. Sidney Bijou was voted President-Elect, and Elsie Pinkston was re-elected to the position of Non Psychology Council member.

2. By the end of the convention, MABA's financial picture was indeed bright. MABA was left with a surplus of over \$20,000.00, which would eliminate deficit spending over the following year.

3. The Council moved to establish a newsletter to incorporate the Call for Papers and the *MABA Report* and to allow transmission of information among MABA members.

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4. Although still unfunded, the *Behavior Analyst* was moving toward publication, with Judith LeBlanc and Scott Wood on the Managing Board. Given a funding source, their goal was to distribute a trial issue early in 1978. It was agreed that the Council would supervise the journal's board. Wood was to prepare a budget and a mock-up of the first issue by August, 1977.

5. The Education and Evaluation Committee reported three major recommendations to the Council. They were:

A. That MABA become a national association to give strength to its recommendations concerning education and evaluation.

B. That MABA adopt a set of guidelines as a framework from which to consider issues of certification, licensing, and boarding.

C. That MABA pursue both boarding and certification, since licensing and certification procedures have proven to be economically and politically beneficial to professions. The Council noted that such procedures would also increase the likelihood of behavior analysts becoming politically active to achieve a significant impact in all human service areas. An additional point was that if MABA does not take an active role, such decisions will be made by persons in other disciplines and legislative bodies who may attempt to license or govern behavior analytic practices.

6. The Council, by straw vote, approved the recommendation that MABA pursue international status in order to help expediate the goals and recommendations established by the Education and Evaluation Committee. The Coordinating Committee and the Education and Evaluation Committee were to work jointly on a proposal dealing with this issue and distribute it at the next Council meeting in October, 1977. The approved proposal would then be voted on by the membership at the next election.

Preparation for the 1978 Convention

As planned, the Council met in Chicago on October 29th, 1977. Many decisions and resolutions were made at this meeting.

1. Five new ad hoc committees and one special interest group were established. They were:

A. Appointment of Chairpersons Committee — to propose a formal mechanism whereby committee chairpersons are appointed, and their terms of office and duties specified. Chaired by Nathan Azrin.

B. Regional Associations Committee — to determine the feasibility of having other regional

meetings for MABA members outside the Midwest. Chaired by Mary Alice White.

C. Functional Classification of Behavior Problems Committee — to draw up a functional classification of behavior problems to be published under MABA's name. Chaired by Sidney Bijou.

D. Behavior Analysis of Social Issues Committee — to address social issues and the factors responsible for them from a behavioral perspective. Chair to be appointed.

E. Structure of Ad Hoc Committees and Special Interest Groups Committee — to design a structure by which persons can establish an ad hoc committee or special interest group. Chaired by Margaret Peterson and Richard Malott.

F. International Behaviorists Special Interest Group — to become involved in the interests of behavior analysts who are working outside of the United States or who would otherwise have an interest in an international group. Chaired by Kathleen Krumhus and Okechukwu Ozuzu.

2. On the recommendation of Elsie Pinkston, Sidney Bijou moved: "That a letter be sent to the Chicago Bureau stating that although the membership had not yet been polled, in keeping with the recent decision of the APA, MABA is seriously considering moving the convention out of Chicago if the Equal Rights Amendment is not passed in the state of Illinois." The motion was approved.

3. The first issue of the *Behavior Analyst* was to be funded by the Association. Furthermore, the Council approved the Wood-LeBlanc proposal to elect six persons (three men and three women) to the Journal Managing Board which would be responsible for selecting a MABA Journal Editor and for establishing and reviewing journal policies and procedures.

4. The Council approved unanimously the motion by Sidney Bijou: "That the name of the association be changed to the 'Association for Behavior Analysis' with an optional subtitle that includes the word 'International'." This motion was to go before the membership for approval in early 1978.

The MABA Staff, consisting of Guy Dennehy, Linda Parrott and Nedra Zerbel, is well into preparation for the 1978 Convention. The program has been scheduled and the hotel arrangements have been finalized. The MABA membership is growing and so is the number of persons interested in presenting at the Convention. The years surrounding MABA's formation, and the confusion generated by such a formation, are now over. Suffice it to say,

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the Midwestern Association of Behavior Analysis has proven its worth and is becoming a professional organization with considerable strength.

From the very first motion, made by Richard Malott at the 1974 meeting at the Chicago Billing's Hospital Auditorium: "That an organization be formed called the Behavior Analysts of the Midwest — BAM!"; from an all-volunteer student staff to the present staff of five students and 15 committees; from 90 interested persons to 2,000 members, many things have transpired within the organization. Perhaps the most exciting decision to be made by the organization is presently at hand — the Midwestern Association of Behavior Analysis to become an international organization. This direction would not only unite behaviorists with various interests and pursuits of cultural importance, all across the nation, but would also provide the much-needed strength in pursuing the issues of licensing and certification at the local, state, and national

level. As Nathan Azrin wrote in his Past President's Message in Vol.1, #1, of the MABA Newsletter: "The MABA Conventions have succeeded in providing a place where behavior analysts at all levels of their careers can meet with others of similar interest and communicate new findings and discuss issues in an active person-to-person style. What we are witnessing with MABA may be not only a distinctive type of regional convention organization, but also the birth of a new separate discipline; separate from Psychology, Psychiatry, Education, and the other related areas. Perhaps this perspective will give a special impetus to the growth of the area, more so than has been possible when behavior analysis has been required to mold its development to conform to the format of the other disciplines. If MABA pursues this direction, it should acquire the status of a national rather than regional organization. The membership and convention statistics indicate that such a transformation has already been underway."