Editorial

Henry D. Schlinger, Jr.

This issue of *The Behavior Analyst* (*TBA*) is bittersweet for me. It is my last as editor and, even though the job has required a lot of time and work, it has been rewarding, especially because I have had the privilege of interacting with scholars in the field, not to mention outstanding guest editors and reviewers. And I eagerly anticipated the arrival of each issue of the journal so I could gaze upon my handiwork. As with every issue in which I wrote an editorial, I debated whether to write one for this issue. But as articles were accepted and the issue began to take shape, it became clear to me that a theme was emerging, and one that not only has been present to varying degrees in each issue of the journal under my tutelage but also has manifested itself during most of the journal's history. That theme is the general health of our field, and I wanted to say a few words about it and the articles.

During my tenure as editor of *TBA*, several articles and commentaries that target the current state of behavior analysis have been published. In fact, this trend began with the last issue under Mike Dougher's editorship with a special section edited by me and titled "The Future of Behavior Analysis." That section contained articles by Friman (2010), Poling (2010), and Palmer (2010) with an introduction by me (Schlinger, 2010), in which I noted that some of the concerns expressed by the authors, related to both the experimental and applied domains, had potentially serious consequences for the future of our field. That section was successful in that it spurred debate, having been cited by several subsequent papers in *TBA* over the past 3 years, including some in the current issue. In other words, those

papers evoked verbal behavior in others that I hoped would lead to more variations in the practice of behavior analysis, both experimental and applied.

Some of the concerns, especially regarding the experimental analysis of behavior (EAB), were tackled head-on by Critchfield (2011c). He argued that in the current climate, research that directly addresses human problems, that is, that is socially relevant, is more likely to be funded. Thus, for basic researchers, adoption of a translational research agenda could be more successful and could be carried out without abandoning the focus on fundamental principles. Six scholars provided commentary on Critchfield's article, both strongly agreeing and disagreeing, but all succeeded in expanding the discussion. Partially in response to his (2011c) article, Critchfield (2011b) described some advice to young basic scientists in terms of the challenges, risks, and benefits they might face in conducting translational research.

Interestingly, at least during my tenure as editor, there have been several articles that, it could be argued, satisfied Critchfield's (2011c) call for translational research and supported the points made by Vollmer (2011) in his commentary that behavior analysts have historically pursued translational research and that they continue to do so. To wit, Escobar and Lattal (2011) described the work of Ben Wykoff, who began his career as an experimental behavior analyst at the University of Minnesota, where, under the guidance of B. F. Skinner, he developed the observing response procedure, and later started two companies devoted to the development of programmed instruction and teaching machines, with the goal of

improving the human condition. Similarly, Thompson (2012), in a tribute to Joe Brady, described how Brady, a basic behavioral researcher, developed multioperant environments for astronauts and microenvironments in which to study drug effects on human social behavior. As Thompson wrote, "Brady created translational neurobehavioral science before such a concept existed" (p. 197). The same, of course, could be said of Wykoff. In the issue that contained Critchfield's target article were two articles that described work training rats to detect land mines (Jones, 2011) and tuberculosis (Poling et al., 2011). Such research is clearly translational and, as Critchfield (2011c) and Pilgrim (2011) in her commentary emphasized, has immediate and profound practical benefits. Finally, Taub (2012) described how a treatment for stroke victims, called constraint-induced movement therapy, has its origins in basic behavior-analytic research using animal models. These are all examples of how individual behavior analysts, in particular, basic behavioral researchers, have engaged in translational behavior that resulted in improving the human condition.

Then, Critchfield (2011a) specifically addressed what many see as the elephant in the room: the growing and potentially divisive relations between scientists and practitioners both within the Association for Behavior Analysis International (ABAI) and in the field at large. He noted that the history of other professional organizations suggests that the solution is for different behavior-analytic organizations (e.g., ABAI and Association of Professional Behavior Analysts, respectively) to serve the separate interests of scientists and practitioners. Critchfield's article evoked two replies in *TBA*, both of which, in their own ways, argued for moderation of his proposal. These discussions about the roles of basic researchers and practitioners are not new to behavior analysis.

Beginning with the fall 2012 issue, we instituted a new section of the journal, called Upon Further Reflection, in which the editor, with the help of the associate editors, selects an article from the archives of *TBA* to reprint. The first article selected was Pierce and Epling's "What Happened to Analysis in Applied Behavior Analysis?" (1980), in which Pierce (2012) noted that the problems he and Epling identified in 1980—the drift in applied behavior analysis in the technical and clinical direction and away from basic laboratory research (i.e., EAB)—have not only continued but have increased, due, in large part, to financial contingencies. I (Schlinger, 2010) made a similar point, more specifically about autism treatment in California, to illustrate that those financial contingencies are responsible for attracting large numbers of behavioral technicians, very few of whom pursue doctoral degrees and even fewer of whom move to academia where they can train more behavior analysts. Of those who do pursue doctoral degrees, fewer receive training in basic behavioral research, which does not bode well for that branch of our field.

Of course, over the past 3 years, the journal has fulfilled its mission and been the home to many articles that have expanded the discussion of a wide range of theoretical issues, including two target articles with commentaries, one on private events (Schlinger, 2011) and one on operant variability (Palmer, 2012).

The current issue continues all of these trends with more thought-provoking articles. In fact, what led me to write this editorial was the similarity of the articles in this issue to those over the past 3 years.

For one, the current issue contains a target article by Vyse, who describes changes in his professional academic behaviors away from behavior analysis and toward an approach that is more inclusive of traditional research designs and top-

ics in psychology, as well as teaching that emphasizes critical scientific thinking in general rather than behavior analysis. He suggests that behavior analysts should follow his example. Four scholars, including both basic and applied researchers, were invited to comment on the Vyse article and, together, continue the discussion about not only the health of the field but also its future direction. Although I see such exchanges as valuable and productive, as I previously noted (Schlinger, 2010), when all is said and done, such discussions may not in fact affect the direction of our field; we may be at the mercy of cultural contingencies (including financial ones), and only time will tell what the behavior analysis of the future will look like. Also, we must remember that the behavior analysts who call for change do so as a result of their own unique histories and current circumstances. For instance, Vyse earned his undergraduate degree in English and has been a professor for years teaching undergraduates in a private liberal arts college with no behavioral colleagues. And even though he is a committed scientist and behavior analyst, it is perhaps understandable that he has come to this point in his career, although other behavior analysts with different histories have come to similar conclusions.

The current issue also contains articles related in different ways to the state of the field, such as the one by Normand and Kohn in which the authors offer suggestions for how behavior analysts can extend their reach in traditionally non-behavior-analytic areas of application and, thus, create not only more job opportunities but also opportunities to spread behavior analysis. One area in which behavior analysts could extend their reach is in the treatment of depression, especially in older adults, and Polenick and Flora suggest one possible strategy—behavior-

al activation. Walters and Thomson describe how since the 1960s, behavior analysis has grown and spread in relatively sparsely populated Manitoba, Canada, and offer this tale as an example of how the same growth may be fostered in similar geographical areas. Smith, in one way to achieve at least one of the suggestions made by Vyse, proposes that practitioners of applied behavior analysis incorporate into a standardized treatment package the multiple intervention strategies necessary to bring about behavior change using within-subject experimental designs. The evaluation of the package, however, would involve the use of between-subjects designs (e.g., randomized clinical trials). Likewise, the behavioral activation strategy mentioned above could also incorporate within-subject designs as applied to the treatment of individuals with depression, but the evaluation of the strategy on a larger scale would necessarily involve between-subjects designs and perhaps randomized clinical trials.

In our second installment of the *Upon Further Reflection* section, Marc Branch was invited to provide a retrospective look at his 1980 article with Malagodi, "Where Have All the Behaviorists Gone?" In the original article, the authors opined that behavior analysis had a small footprint in psychology, suggested several possible explanations, and offered some solutions for increasing its impact. In his comment, Branch argues that, even though the footprint is still small, it is growing, thanks in large part to the effectiveness of applied behavior-analytic approaches to autism which, according to Branch, might provide "an entrée into the world of mainstream psychology" (p. 176, but see Schlinger, 2010).

The current issue also contains articles that deal with different aspects of applied behavior analysis. In the article by Morris, Altus, and Smith, the authors undertake a sys-

tematic study of the founding of behavior analysis through its publications. They conclude that identification of its founding publications is irresolvable because much depends on the methods used to identify them and because the field's founding was an evolutionary process.

And in our On Terms section, Seniuk, Witts, Williams, and Ghezzi suggest that because the term *behavioral coaching* has been used inconsistently, behavior analysts should adopt a more consistent definition based on the dimensions of applied behavior analysis.

The issue concludes with an In Memoriam by James Barrett to one of the pioneers of behavioral psychology and the principal founder of behavioral pharmacology, Peter Dews, followed by an excerpt from the preface (Dews, 1970) he wrote to the *Festschrift for B. F. Skinner*. In his tribute, Barrett notes that, although Dews earned a medical degree, when he came to Harvard in 1953 and was introduced to Skinner and his work with Ferster on schedules of reinforcement, he was "struck with the objective and quantifiable methods" (p. 000) in Skinner's lab. Dews then incorporated those techniques not only in his studies on the behavioral effects of drugs but also in his basic research on reinforcement schedules.

In his preface to *Festschrift for B. F. Skinner*, Dews (1970) wrote that Skinner had four types of skills: "the ability to recognize and to define important problems susceptible to scientific elucidation ..., the tactical ability to conceive and conduct experiments sufficiently limited in scope to be rigorous, but advancing science according to the general strategy ..., the innovative ingenuity and technical skill needed for the actual conduct of elegant experiments ...," and "the ability to see how the results of experiments contribute to understanding, and to use the results to guide the tactics of future experiments" (p. ix). Although very few, if

any, single individuals since Skinner have embodied all of these traits, I'd like to think that behavior analysis as a whole still does and, therefore, I remain optimistic about its future. As Dews said, "Massive advances in science can affect society either by changing man's views of himself or by leading to substantive changes in his environment" (p. ix). This, I think, was Skinner's view of the potential contributions of the experimental analysis of behavior, and it is my hope as well.

Finally, I would like to thank several people for their help during my editorship. First, I am very appreciative of the help offered by Maria Malott and Majda Seuss, who responded promptly to my queries and assisted me in extending the reach of the journal by making changes, especially on the website. I want to thank Kathy Hill for her expert copyediting and for being patient with me as each deadline approached. Lastly, I thank my two outstanding associate editors (AEs), Jim Carr and Matt Normand. An editor could not have asked for better AEs. And although either of them could have easily moved in to fill my not-so-big shoes, I asked Matt Normand, he has agreed, and the ABAI Council has confirmed him as the next editor of *TBA*. I leave the editorship confident that it is in good hands, and now, even more than ever, I look forward to the arrival of each issue.

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