



## Four Corners ABA Schedule

### Thirteenth Annual Conference

April 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> in Colorado Springs, Colorado

#### Friday, April 3<sup>rd</sup>

7:30-8:30 AM Check-in and on-site registration

8:00-8:30 AM Continental Breakfast

8:30-8:45 AM Opening Remarks  
Zach Maple, President

8:45-9:45 AM Dr. Joshua Jessel (Queens College)  
Evaluating Practitioner-Informed Strategies for Reducing Problem Behavior: A Lesson in Reverse Translational Research

The functional analysis was developed as a tool intended to help identify the environmental variables contributing to problem behavior and inform subsequent function-based treatment strategies. However, many practical barriers were recognized by clinicians and these barriers stymied the widespread adoption of the functional analysis over other assessment alternatives (e.g., indirect and descriptive assessments). This led many applied researchers to return to the laboratory and focus on improving analytic efficiency, ecological validity, and overall safety of the assessment and treatment process. During this talk I will be discussing some reverse translational research informed by the everyday demands of clinicians. Our participants vary from pigeons to college students and individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The culmination of our research is intended to further develop and validate a comprehensive program that is found to be socially acceptable among caregivers and clinicians and has the potential to achieve sustainable improvements in problem behavior.

10:00-11:00 AM Dr. Paul Guinther (Anchor and Arrow Behavioral Health)  
Discriminating the Constant Self of Mindfulness Practices

Mindfulness meditation practices have been found to accrue in a variety of physical, psychological, and interpersonal benefits. Acceptance and Commitment Therapy posits that mindfulness meditation and related interventions improve wellbeing through fostering improvements in a flexible perspective taking repertoire. Such perspective taking involves responding in terms of a self who is distinct from one's own thoughts, feelings, and other behavior. This "self-as-context" repertoire has been characterized in various ways, including conceiving of the self as being the spatiotemporal coordinate "here now." Identifying

with one's spatiotemporal perspective (i.e., "being present") would ostensibly involve discriminating the self's spatiotemporal perspective. At a basic research level, this poses something of a dilemma to the behavior analyst aiming to achieve successful contextual influence over self-as-context repertoires. Specifically, given one's nonarbitrary spatiotemporal perspective is constant, it seemingly cannot signal the availability of reinforcement for a particular response. It is proposed that this dilemma can be resolved by training relative deictic pointing, involving the discrimination of the self's perspective from the perspective of others. Relative deictic pointing has been brought under contextual control in verbally competent adults using a Relational Triangulation Perspective Taking Protocol (see Guinther, 2017; 2018). This operant match-to-sample training and testing procedure was originally configured as a behavior analytic analog of the Sally-Anne false-belief test for Theory of Mind (Baron-Cohen, Leslie, & Frith, 1985; Wimmer & Perner, 1983), but it will be discussed here in terms of its implications for discriminating the constant self of mindfulness practices.

11:15-12:15 PM      Dr. James Partington (Partington Behavior Analysts)  
**Dixie Eastridge Memorial Speaker**  
Programming for Success: Critical Elements of an Effective  
Intervention for Individuals with Autism

This talk will address the critical elements of an effective intervention program including the identification and tracking of skills and skill deficits, selecting prioritized learning objectives, ensuring active engagement by a motivated learner, providing many teaching trials each day, teaching activities in varied learning environments, and ensuring parent participation. This talk will include the presentation of the patterns of skill development of typically-developing children as measured by the ABLLS-R.

12:15-1:45 PM      Lunch (not included)

1:45-2:45 PM      Dr. Leilani Feliciano (University of Colorado, Colorado Springs)  
Behavioral Interventions in Dementia: Research and Practice Needs

As our population ages, we (as clinicians and researchers) will be faced with a growing number of health and mental health management issues. According to the Institute of Medicine (2012), approximately 14-20% of older adults suffer from a diagnosable mental health disorder, including depressive disorders, anxiety disorders, psychotic disorders, and neurocognitive disorders. Unfortunately, only about one-third of older adults who experience a mental disorder receive care (National Council on Aging, 2012). As such, the U.S. is in great need of practitioners and researchers trained in the special needs of older adults. These pressing treatment needs confer opportunities for research and development of novel interventions. This talk will primarily focus on behavioral gerontology research in one such area, behavioral and psychiatric symptoms associated with dementia (BPSD). Several areas for intervention with BPSD will be reviewed, as well as, recent examples of work in this area.

3:00-4:00 PM Courtney Collins and Joel Munson (The Realm of Care)  
Cannabinoid Therapy Observational Research Registry (ORR)  
Data: Current Health Impact of Participants Diagnosed with  
Epilepsy, Autism Spectrum Disorders, Anxiety, and Depression

The Realm of Caring (RoC) is an independent, high impact 501(c)(3) nonprofit located in Colorado Springs, Colorado, that currently conducts the largest cannabis/hemp Observational Research Registry (ORR) in the US in collaboration with Johns Hopkins University and University of Pennsylvania. The ORR enables the RoC to give data-driven answers to consumers, medical professionals, community and industry partners about cannabinoid therapies using validated measures. We currently serve over 59,000 clients worldwide with a network of over 1,200 health care providers. RoC will present findings from the survey studies of the health impact of cannabinoid use among participants with epilepsy, autism spectrum disorders, anxiety, and depression.

4:15-5:15 PM Dr. Barb Kaminski and Megan Sullivan Kirby (Uncomfortable X)  
"I'm Uncomfortable with That": Problem Solving in the Gray Areas

Despite the resources available to teach and provide guidance related to professional issues, applied behavior analysts in practice often find themselves in uncomfortable situations that are not addressed in these resources. Applied behavior analyst instruction and supervision rarely includes specific training on problem solving strategies. Further, after certification BCBAs often find themselves without adequate professional networks and mentors to assist with problem solving through "gray area" issues and situations. Professional dilemma scenarios derived from posts to the Facebook group "Uncomfortable BCBA" will be presented and reasoning strategies for problem-solving derived from subjectivism and ethical relativism, as they can be applied to complex professional issues, will be described.

5:30-6:45 PM 4cABA Business Meeting (all members welcome)

6:45-8:00 PM Dinner (not included)

8:00-10:00 PM Poster Session (cash bar available)

# Four Corners ABA Schedule

## Thirteenth Annual Convention

April 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> in Colorado Springs, Colorado

### Saturday, April 4<sup>th</sup>

- 7:45-8:15 AM      Check-in and on-site registration
- 7:45-8:15 AM      Continental Breakfast
- 8:15-8:30 AM      Opening Remarks  
Casey Clay, President Elect
- 8:30-9:30 AM      Dr. Jonathan Miller (University of Colorado School of Medicine)  
The Weight of Our Choices: Understanding Obesity through Behavioral Economics

Obesity is a serious health condition that continues to be a growing problem in the United States and around the world. It is largely the product of numerous behavioral patterns that converge to result in consistently greater amounts of energy being consumed than expended. Behavioral economics has provided a useful framework for understanding conditions that promote obesogenic behavior. In particular, delay discounting and behavioral demand assessments, which quantify how commodities (e.g., money, food) are valued by an individual, have been widely used to study choice behavior that may underlie this problem. In this presentation, I will review existing literature examining obesity via behavioral economics, discuss my work extending these methods to investigate the influence of biological and cultural factors on choice, and highlight areas of future research.

- 9:45-10:45 AM      Worner Leland (Empowered: A Center for Sexuality)  
Sexual and Sexual Appearing Behavior: Ethics of Analysis and Harm Reduction

In our work as behavior analysts, we often encounter clients who engage in sexual or sexual appearing behavior. For many helping professionals it is ethically unclear if or how these behaviors should be addressed while working within one's boundaries of competence, especially if the behavior is high risk. This presentation will address approaching sexual behavior as operant and respondent behavior, and will address the ethics of assessing behavior and utilizing behavior analytic strategies and supports to reduce potential harm to clients as well as potential harm that clients may cause to themselves or others.

11:00-12:00 PM      Dr. Sho Araiba (Positive Behavior Supports Corporation)  
Current Diversification of Behaviorism in the studies of the Fixed-Interval Schedule

Over the last few decades, behaviorism as a philosophy of the science of psychology, especially in the field of behavior analysis and related areas, has diversified to the point that scholars from inside and outside the field are often confused about what exactly behaviorism is. These are Radical Behaviorism, Emergent Behaviorism, Theoretical Behaviorism, Contextualistic Behaviorism, Teleological Behaviorism, Multiscale Behaviorism, Molar Multiscale View, and Intentional Behaviorism. In this presentation, I demonstrate how such diversification of behaviorism has arisen over time by analyzing the studies of the Fixed-Interval Schedule of reinforcement. The key factor is the agent problem.

### **Post-Conference Workshop**

12:15-12:30 PM      Check-in and on-site registration (boxed-lunch provided)

12:30-12:45 PM      Workshop introduction

12:45-3:45 PM      Dr. James Partington (Partington Behavior Analysts)  
Developing Effective Educational Programs for Learners of All  
Ages Using the ABLLS-R® and AFLS®

This workshop is designed for consultants to learn how to quickly assess skills and design comprehensive intervention programs for children with autism using the ABLLS-R® and AFLS®. Many funding sources limit the time consultants have to conduct an assessment and design an intervention program. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct comprehensive, yet time-efficient assessments that lead to the development of effective educational programs. It is necessary to prioritize learning objectives for basic language and learner skills to allow students to learn from their everyday interactions with others. To facilitate a rapid acquisition of critical skills, it is important that specific learning objectives are based on the patterns of skill development of neurotypical children. Participants will compare the skill levels of young children with autism to the age-equivalent skills of typically developing children from a peer-reviewed journal publication. Participants will learn to analyze programs for nonverbal individuals and select learning objectives that identify the skills necessary to develop instructional control and to establish an initial verbal repertoire. Participants will also learn to analyze programs for an individual who has basic mand, tact, and intraverbal skills, and select learning objectives that will lead to development of more advanced language, social interaction, and functional living skills.

#### **Objectives:**

1. Participants will be able to state strategies to rapidly assess the basic language and learning skills of young students with an Autism Spectrum Disorder.
2. Participants will be able to compare the existing skill levels of a child with an autism spectrum disorder with the age-equivalent skills of typically developing children.

3. Participants will be able to state strategies for developing a prioritized set of learning objectives based upon a student's current set of skills.
4. Participants will be able to state when it is appropriate to transition from programs that prioritize the development of basic language and learner skills to a program with a greater emphasis on developing functional living skills.