

# 4<sup>th</sup> Annual MABA Conference

Saturday October 24, 2009

Hanley Hall, St Paul's College – 70 Dysart Rd

University of Manitoba

Winnipeg



**MABA**  
4<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference  
**Manitoba Association for  
Behaviour Analysis**  
**Winnipeg, Saturday October 24, 2009**

**Purpose of event:** The Manitoba Association for Behaviour Analysis (MABA) is holding its 4<sup>th</sup> annual conference on October 24<sup>th</sup> 2009. MABA's purpose and mission is to develop and disseminate knowledge about behaviour analysis as a science. MABA's interests lie in basic science, focusing on principles governing human and nonhuman behaviour (i.e., the experimental analysis of behaviour); applied science, focusing on application of those principles to improve socially important problems (i.e., applied behaviour analysis); and the dissemination of information to stimulate interest in, and correct misunderstandings about, behaviour analysis. Behaviour analysis can be used to treat a wide variety of clinical disorders such as anxiety, depression, autism, and sexual dysfunction. Behaviour analysis can also be used to teach a wide variety of skills such as life skills, language, academics, and social skills. Further, behaviour analysis can be used to help assess and treat various challenging behaviours.

**Location:** The conference will be held in St Paul's College (70 Dysart Road) at the University of Manitoba Fort Garry Campus. The conference will be held in Hanley Hall. Free parking is available across from St. Paul's College.



**Audience and Participants:** The MABA conference attracts various undergraduate and graduate students in the field of psychology. It further attracts psychology professors, clinical psychologists, educators, and individuals working with people with clinical disorders.

**Accommodations:** This year the Inn at the Forks is reserving a group of rooms for conference registrants for a rate of \$119 CAD per night. When making your reservation say you are registering a room under UofM Psychology. The hotel is located at 75 Market Road. You can contact the hotel by calling 1-877-377-4100 (toll free in North America) or (204) 942-6555. You can also visit their website at <http://www.innforke.com>.

**Equipment required:** Participants are not required to bring any materials to the event. It is encouraged that notes be taken by participants. Presentations given by various speakers will be done using an LCD and laptop allowing for all participants to see the presentations and hear the presenters.

**Cost:** Early registration rate is offered to all participants registering before August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2009. A reduced registration rate is also given to members of the Manitoba Association for Behaviour Analysis. Participants who are not members and wish to become members to receive the registration discount can complete and submit the member registration form along with their conference registration form. Participants who choose to can also register online ([www.maba.ca](http://www.maba.ca)) using a Pay Pal account. Refunds will not be given to those who have registered and do not attend. Please see the attached conference registration form for the registration cost.

**Length of conference:** The length of the conference will consist of a full day of paper presentations, poster presentations, and a one hour round table discussion. The conference begins at 8:50 am and ends at approximately 4:00 pm with a one-hour lunch (provided) break and two 10 min coffee breaks.

**Call for papers:** Psychologists, students, professors, researchers, and clinicians are encouraged to submit a poster or presentation. More information is provided on the call for papers poster attached or by visiting our website at [www.maba.ca](http://www.maba.ca).

**Fundraising:** In order to help MABA promote and disseminate knowledge about behaviour analysis in the province, MABA will be selling MABA merchandise as well as organizing a silent auction. Merchandise can be purchased throughout the day and winners of the silent auction will be announced at the end of the conference.

**Evaluation:** In our continuous efforts to improve our conference every year, we would like to hear what you think. At the conference you will be given an evaluation form, please complete the evaluation by rating the presenters and different aspects of the conference. We would also like to hear what you would like to see next year.

**After Party:** After the conference, our President Kirsten Wirth will be hosting a social evening located 3 km North East of the Perimeter. The party begins at 7pm, people are welcome to come and mingle and meet other members, presenters, and behaviour analysts. Location maps will be provided at the conference. Please RSVP by October 16th by emailing Colleen Murphy [cmurphy@st.amant.mb.ca](mailto:cmurphy@st.amant.mb.ca).

A SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR FUNDERS

FACULTY OF ARTS  
ENDOWMENT FUND



DEPARTMENT OF  
PSYCHOLOGY

# DETAILED PROGRAM

## WELCOME

8<sup>50</sup>-9<sup>00</sup>

Carole Marion, MABA conference chair

## PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

9<sup>00</sup>-9<sup>25</sup>

**Clinical applications of behaviour analysis**

**Dr. Kirsten Wirth, Ph.D., C.Psych., Candidate**

Dr. Kirsten Wirth received her PhD at the University of Manitoba and is the Clinical Coordinator for the St. Amant School-Age ABA Program. She is also the founder and current President of the Manitoba Association for Behaviour Analysis.

There is a general belief among psychologists that behaviour analysis is limited to treatment programs for children with autism and developmental disabilities. In fact, some fields believe that behaviour analysis is dead. These beliefs are highly erroneous. Behaviour analysts tend to consider problems in terms of their behaviour; whereas, other psychologists consider problems in terms of the disorder, which may lead to the belief that behaviour analysis, is narrow. This presentation will discuss the growth in behaviour analysis, a variety of disorders and behaviours that behaviour analysis has been used to treat, as well as areas that show potential and require further investigation.

## KEY NOTE SPEAKER

9<sup>25</sup>-10<sup>25</sup>

**Motivating Operations for Challenging Behavior in Classrooms: Analysis and Intervention**

**Dr. Jennifer McComas, Ph.D.**

Dr. Jennifer McComas is a full professor in the Department of Educational Psychology at the University of Minnesota. Her current research interests include functional analysis and treatment for challenging behavior and academic skill deficits, the influence of the principles of behavior on learning, and the persistence of individual and systems change.

Functional analysis technology has facilitated the identification of operant reinforcers of challenging behaviour. Reinforcers are generally considered in two broad classes of positive and negative reinforcement. However, the fact is that a wide variety of specific stimuli reside within those broad classes of reinforcement and serve to reinforce challenging behaviour. To add a further layer of complexity, some of those reinforcers are dynamic in nature, with their influence on behaviour being transient and sometimes difficult to predict. This presentation will discuss the nature of motivating operations and their influence on challenging behaviour in classrooms as well as illustrative analyses and interventions. Finally, potential directions for future research will be suggested.

## RESEARCH REPORT

10<sup>25</sup>-10<sup>50</sup>

### Teaching Perspective Taking Skills to Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders

Kerri Walters, M.A., C.Psych. Candidate, Victoria Sobie, B.A. (Honours), & Dr. C.T., Yu, PhD. C. Psych

#### Kerri Walters, M.A. C.Psych., Candidate

Kerri Walters is a PhD student in her final year of study in the Applied Behaviour Analysis program in the department of Psychology at the University of Manitoba under the supervision of Dr. C. T. Yu. Kerri works as a Lead Consultant in the St. Amant Applied Behaviour Analysis program in Winnipeg, Manitoba, specializing in assessing and treating challenging behaviours with children with autism spectrum disorders. Kerri has co-authored four papers and one book chapter (in press) and has co-authored 45 scientific conference presentations.

#### Victoria Sobie, B.A. (Honours)

Victoria Sobie completed her Honours BA in Psychology in May of 2009. She is currently working as an ABA tutor for the St. Amant ABA Program and as a Research Assistant for the St. Amant Research Centre

Perspective taking is the ability to see the world from another person's viewpoint and this is often studied experimentally using tasks referred to as "false belief" (FB) tasks. Approximately 80% of children with autism spectrum disorders (ASDs) with a verbal mental age of 4 years, however, do not pass these tasks. Relatively little evidence is available on intervention strategies with children with ASDs. One promising training approach has involved breaking down the FB task into components, and teaching and linking the components together, a procedure which has produced improved task performance and some generalization of the skill across tasks. This area of research, however, could be improved in several ways. We present a procedure which was developed based on a task analysis of perspective taking skills required to perform false belief tasks. A combination of task analysis, chaining, and prompt-fading was used to teach 3 children with ASDs to perform FB tasks using a multiple-baseline design across task components.

## COFFEE BREAK

10<sup>50</sup>-11<sup>00</sup>

## RESEARCH REPORT

11<sup>00</sup>-11<sup>25</sup>

### Effects of Fixed- and Variable-Time Schedules of Mirror Presentations on the Swimming Behaviour of *Betta splendens*

Dr. Toby Martin, PhD. ,& Dr. Joseph Pear, PhD., C.Psych.

Dr. Toby Martin completed a PhD. in psychology at the University of Manitoba in 2009. He is manager at St. Amant Research Centre, where he assists in supervising a variety of research projects in developmental disabilities and autism. His research interests include choice-making and ethical issues related to neuroimaging.

The effects of response-independent mirror presentation schedules on the swimming behaviour of *Betta splendens* were studied in two experiments. In experiment 1, four fish received alternating baseline (no mirror) and fixed-time (FT) 2-min or variable-time (VT) 2-min mirror presentation conditions. Two fish consistently showed increased rates of mirror-side lap-swimming (MSLS; a back-and-forth swimming pattern) and decreased distance from the mirror during the inter-stimulus intervals (ISIs) of FT and VT sessions, and during baseline sessions that followed FT and VT phases. Data from one fish indicated that a VT schedule might increase both proximity to the mirror and MSLS rates that have decreased on FT. Therefore, in experiment 2 three fish from experiment 1 received alternating FT and VT conditions. Proximity to the mirror and MSLS rates increased during VT phases relative to FT phases in two fish, though effects were small and did not occur across all alternations.

Additional findings were that MSLS during ISIs tended to increase within FT phases, that MSLS generally occurred either at a steady rate within ISIs or showed a scalloped effect, that mirror presentations produced approach to the mirror side that persisted during ISIs and subsequent baseline phases, and that mirror-side distance during the mirror presentations was less than during the ISIs.

Although the findings were not consistent across all fish, they were replicated a number of times within at least two of the fish. The findings are discussed in terms of adventitious operant conditioning, respondent conditioning, and the behaviour systems approach. The results of this study increase the generality of response-independent schedule effects on locomotive behaviour.

## RESEARCH REPORT

11<sup>25</sup>-11<sup>50</sup>

### **Are Symmetric and Generalized Matching-to-Sample Skills Associated with Picture Preference Assessments?**

**Leslie Thorne, M.A.**

Leslie Thorne is a PhD student in the area of Applied Behavior Analysis at the University of Manitoba under the supervision of Dr. Dickie Yu. Her dissertation research examines matching skills associated with performance on picture preference assessments with persons with developmental disabilities.

In stimulus preference assessments for people with severe developmental disabilities, some individuals are able to select their preferred stimuli when pictures or the actual items are presented (Picture Group) while others can do so only with objects (Object Group). Since pictures are much more practical to use than objects, it would be desirable to evaluate the performance of the two groups on various types of discriminations. Such differences may help to identify critical skills for training. This study compared the performance of a Picture Group (n = 9) and an Object Group (n = 11) on three types of two-choice matching-to-sample discriminations: (a) symmetric object-picture matching, (b) generalized symmetric object-picture matching, and (c) generalized picture-picture identity matching. The symmetric object-picture matching task consisted of trials where objects were samples and pictures were comparisons and trials where objects and pictures were in reversed roles. The generalized symmetric object-picture matching task was similar to the symmetric object-picture matching

task except that 10 different sets of the task stimuli were used. Lastly, the generalized picture-picture identity matching task consisted of trials with 10 different sets of task stimuli, where both samples and comparisons were pictures and the sample was identical to one of the comparisons on each trial. The passing criterion for each task was 80% or higher. The results showed that all 11 (100%) Object Group participants but only 1 (11%) Picture Group participant failed all three tasks. In the Picture Group, 1 (11%) participant passed the symmetric object-picture matching task, 4 (44%) passed the generalized symmetric matching task, and 6 (67%) passed the generalized picture-picture identity matching task. The results showed a statistically significant between-group main effect ( $p < .001$ ) and a task x group interaction ( $p < .05$ ). The two groups did not differ significantly on the symmetric object-picture matching task, but differed significantly on the generalized symmetric object-picture matching task ( $p = .011$ ) and on the generalized picture-picture identity matching task ( $p < .001$ ). These results suggest that generalized identity picture matching appears to be most important among the discriminations evaluated. Future research should attempt to teach generalized picture identity matching to individuals in the Object Group and evaluate its impact on picture preference assessment.

## **LUNCH BREAK (provided) 11<sup>50</sup>-12<sup>50</sup>**

### **INVITED SPEAKER**

**12<sup>50</sup>-1<sup>35</sup>**

### **Expanding Functional Analysis of Automatically Reinforced Behavior Using a Three Component Multiple-Schedule**

**Dr. John T. Rapp, Ph.D.**

Dr. John T. Rapp is a Professor in the Behaviour Analysis program within the Community Psychology Department at St. Cloud State University, St. Cloud, MN. Dr. Rapp received a Ph.D. in Behaviour Analysis from the University of Florida under the supervision of Timothy Vollmer in 2003. He has co-authored over 50 papers and chapters, a dozen of which focus on the assessment and treatment of automatically reinforced problem behaviour.

Current functional analysis methodology provides the general label “automatic reinforcement” for behaviours that persist in the absence of social consequences. However, the assessment does not provide information regarding either the (a) specific source of reinforcement maintaining the automatically reinforced behaviour or (b) type of stimulation that can decrease the behaviour. We present a sequential assessment model to conduct a functional analysis of automatically reinforced behaviour using a three-component multiple-schedule. This three-component multiple-schedule can be used to identify functionally matched stimuli for automatically reinforced behaviour by examining subsequent engagement in the target behaviour. A step-by-step description of the procedures and of data analysis is provided. The potential clinical utility of the methodology and applications for future research are also discussed.

## RESEARCH REPORT

1<sup>35</sup>-2<sup>00</sup>

### **Prominence of physical activity as a moderating health behavior in Northern Plains American Indians**

**Dr. Dmitri V. Poltavski, Ph.D.**, Dr. Jeffrey Holm, Ph. D., & Dr. Nancy Vogeltanz-Holm, Ph.D.

#### **Dr. Dmitri V. Poltavski, Ph.D.**

Dr. Poltavski is an experimental psychologist in the Department of Psychology at the University of North Dakota. From 2003 to 2009 Dr. Poltavski served as a Senior Research Analyst at the Center for Health Promotion and Prevention Research at the University of North Dakota evaluating programs aimed at reduction of obesity and tobacco use.

Health-related quality of life measures (HR-QOL) used in the annual Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) survey administered in the US by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) have been shown to reliably predict loss of function, morbidity and mortality. A CDC report evaluating HRQOL measures between 1993 and 2001 indicated the poorest HRQOL outcomes for American Indians / Alaska Natives, while another CDC report that assessed 1997-2000 BRFSS data emphasized health disparities among various ethnic groups in the US with particular prominence of obesity, diabetes, cigarette smoking, sedentary life style and binge drinking among American Indians and Alaska Natives. Furthermore, the BRFSS telephone survey for the most part overlooks AI/AN communities residing on reservations where health disparities may be further exacerbated. The purpose of the present study was to help eliminate health disparities in AI/AN communities by analyzing associations of behavioral health risks with HR-QOL measures while controlling for demographic variables on several AI reservations in the Northern Plains.

The sample comprised participants representing 4 AI Nations residing on the territory of North Dakota. The total of 404 participants were interviewed face-to-face in their homes using a computer-administered BRFSS structured interview. A series of multiple regression analyses were then conducted to determine individual relationships of health risk factors such as cigarette smoking, unhealthy alcohol consumption and healthy behaviors such as regular physical activity, adequate intake of fruits and vegetables with HR-QOL measures while controlling for demographic variables and access to health care.

The results showed that compliance with recommendations for minimal weekly physical activity was the only behavioral variable to significantly predict health-related quality of life. Specifically adequate levels of physical activity were associated with significantly better overall health, better mental health, fewer activity limitation days and more good health days in the 30 days preceding the survey even in the presence of a chronic disease condition and/or high BMI.

Health-related quality of life and possibly morbidity and mortality in some American Indian communities may be significantly improved by increasing any type of their regular physical

activity (either moderate or vigorous) at least to the level of current recommendations by the CDC and the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM).

While more studies are needed to investigate relationships of various health risks and health behaviors with HR-QOL measures in AI/AN populations, promotion of regular physical activity in American Indian communities should become an urgent public health initiative tailored to their specific cultural and social needs.

## Poster Presentation 2<sup>00</sup>-2<sup>30</sup>

### **ON THE RELATION BETWEEN LANGUAGE SKILLS AND VALUING CHOICE OPPORTUNITIES IN INDIVIDUALS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES**

**Lindsay Arnal**, Kerri Walters, Carly Thiessen, Leslie Thorne, Toby Martin, & C. T. Yu

**St. Amant Research Centre, University of Manitoba**

Taryn Nepon

**York University**

Little is known about how language skills influence preference for choice opportunities over non-choice opportunities with respect to leisure activities. Much of the research examining preference for choice has been limited to contrived tasks and situations. In our study, preference for choice over no-choice was evaluated in the context of typical leisure activities among individuals with limited vocal language skills and those with high levels of vocal language skills. Data collection consisted of observing occasions when participants were given a chance to perform a selected activity, and occasions when participants were given a chance to choose between two activities. We hypothesized that participants in the high vocal language group would prefer (i.e. select) choice more frequently than no-choice, which may be attributed to more exposure to choice opportunities in their day-to-day activities compared to individuals with limited vocal language. Individuals in the limited vocal language group showed minimal, or no, preference for choice over no-choice opportunities. Data collection is ongoing for the high levels vocal language group. Data for each participant's choice and no-choice selections will be presented and compared in terms of language skill level.

### **TEACHING VIDEO CHOICE-MAKING TO ADULTS WITH SEVERE DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES.**

**May Lee**, C. T. Yu, Toby Martin, & Garry Martin

**St. Amant Research Centre, University of Manitoba**

We evaluated a fading procedure to teach 2 adults with severe developmental disabilities to choose their preferred activities using video presentations. Training involved presenting static images of objects on a computer screen, which initially controlled responding. Across trials, an increasing portion of the trial interval was replaced with motion video of the activities until the static display was replaced completely by video. Each participant learned to respond to the video presentation in a multiple-baseline design across activities and maintained those skills

during follow-up. Video presentation may offer a highly practical alternative for activities that could not be adequately or practically represented using objects in preference assessments.

### **TEACHING VISUAL PERSPECTIVE TAKING SKILLS TO A CHILD WITH AUTISM**

**Victoria Sobie**, Kerri Walters, C. T. Yu, Jacklyn Caners, Amber Kulczycki

**St. Amant Research Centre, University of Manitoba**

An inability to take another person's perspective impedes social-skills development. Typically developing children learn to take the perspective of another person by about age 4, whereas approximately 80% of children with autism spectrum disorders (ASDs) do not (Baron-Cohen, Leslie, & Frith, 1985). Previous research on teaching perspective taking to children with ASDs has yielded mixed results. The purpose of this study was to teach one child with an ASD to perform visual perspective-taking tasks using a combination of behavioural techniques including reinforcement, prompt fading, error correction, generalization programming and forward chaining. A within-subject multiple-baseline design across task components was used to evaluate acquisition of the training task and generalization to untrained tasks. The results of the training procedures and implications of the findings will be discussed.

### **GRADUATED EXPOSURE TO A MOCK MRI SCANNER INCREASES WILLINGNESS AND COMFORT IN YOUNG CHILDREN.**

**Toby Martin**, **St. Amant Research Centre**

Deborah Shiloff, **Institute for Biodiagnostics**

Krisztina Maliszka, **Institute for Biodiagnostics, University of Manitoba**

C.T.Yu. **University of Manitoba, St. Amant Research Centre**

MRI environments can be stressful to patients, presenting ethical challenges for MRI research protocols, particularly when they involve children. Training in a mock scanner environment can minimize anxiety during MRI scans for children aged 6 to 17 (Rosenberg et al., 1997). We hypothesized that a graduated exposure procedure would effectively overcome unwillingness to approach MRI scanning situations in children aged 3 to 6 years.

Participants were 14 healthy children aged 3 to 6 years (mean age 58 months), with no known history of anxiety disorders, who were unable to fully approach an MRI scanner in a previous experiment by the authors. Training took place in a realistic mock scanner apparatus, including a full-sized bed, head coil, main bore, and recorded MRI scanning noises. Children were taught to report their discomfort level on a 5-point visual scale. They were then prompted through an 7-step approach sequence, in which step 1 was standing outside the mock scanning room, and step 7 was lying on the mock scanner bed while it was fully inserted into the bore. If a child balked at a step, or reported a high discomfort rating, then a new intermediate approximation was created between the last successful step and the problematic step. If the intermediate step was completed, the child was praised and encouraged to relax for 30 seconds, e.g. by chatting with the experimenters or playing with a toy. The next step was then attempted.

All children completed the full approach sequence in an average of 2 1-hour sessions (range: 1 session to 4 sessions), without adverse emotional reactions. Participants advanced from 1 to 7

steps further relative to their performance in a previous experiment that did not include the creation of intermediate approximations (mean steps improved: 4.1). We conclude that a graduated exposure procedure is effective at helping children to complete an approach to a mock scanner environment, when those children were previously unwilling to approach a real MRI scanner. The procedure requires few sessions, and could realistically be added to MRI research protocols to reduce risk of psychological harm and subject attrition.

### **PARENT TRAINING THROUGH A CONSULTATIVE MODEL TO IMPLEMENT A BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION FOR ADOLESCENTS WITH AGGRESSIVE AND NON-COMPLIANT BEHAVIOR.**

**Jennifer R. Thorsteinsson**, Vicki Stubbings  
**Community Support Program, St. Amant.**

Two case studies of adolescents with behavioral problems including non-compliance and aggression. Each case began with an assessment of the behaviors utilizing the Functional Analysis Interview Form (FAIF), Motivation Assessment Scale (MAS), Scales of Independent Behavior – Revised (SIB-R), data collected by parents within the natural environment and observations by the consultant within the family home. A consultative model was used to teach parent to implement a reinforcement treatment program customized to the individual. In addition, anger management training was provided with parents assuming an active role to ensure the continued use of the skills taught. The consultant trained the parents to implement the reinforcement treatment program and then monitored for consistency. Results for both adolescents indicate a decrease in non-compliance and aggression and an increase in positive adaptive behaviors.

### **TEACHING VISUAL-VISUAL NON-IDENTITY MATCHING TASKS TO PERSONS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DELAY**

**Colleen Murphy**, Garry L. Martin, Maria Figueiroa, & C.T. Yu  
**St. Amant Research Centre and University of Manitoba**

The Assessment of Basic Learning Abilities (ABLA) test assesses an individual's ability to learn six visual and auditory discrimination tasks. These tasks, called levels, are hierarchically ordered in terms of difficulty. ABLA level 5, an auditory-visual discrimination, has been found to be uninformative because most participants who pass level 5 also pass level 6. However, a visual-visual non-identity matching (VVNM) prototype task has been found to fall between ABLA levels 4 and 6. In this study, I identified two adults with developmental delay who initially failed a VVNM discrimination. Then, using a single-subject alternating-treatments design, I attempted to teach one VVNM training task using standard prompting and reinforcement (SPR) and a second VVNM training task using within-stimulus prompt fading. Results indicate that both participants had difficulty learning the VVNM training tasks using SPR and sequential fading (in which the first stimulus was faded, followed by the second stimulus). Additional probing suggests the participants were responding by exclusion. As a result, we began using simultaneous fading, in which both stimuli were faded at the same time and rate. The

participants learned VVNM training tasks using simultaneous fading, indicating that this fading method has considerable potential for teaching VVNM tasks.

## **EVALUATION OF MULTIPLE-STIMULUS PREFERENCE ASSESSMENT WITH ADULTS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES**

**Carly Thiessen**, Gareth Davies, C. T. Yu, Toby Martin, & Garry L. Martin  
**St Amant Research Centre and University of Manitoba**

Preference assessment procedures can be used to identify reinforcers for persons with developmental disabilities. We compared multiple-stimulus without replacement (MSWO) and paired-stimulus (PS) procedures to assess preferences of nine adults with developmental disabilities. Preference rankings obtained from the procedures were positively correlated for all participants (mean  $\tau = .72$ , range .41 to 1). Four participants did not select the same item as most-preferred in both procedures; they were increasingly able to pick the most-preferred item available during MSWO as the number of items decreased across trials. Five participants selected the same item as their most-preferred in both procedures; their preferred-stimulus selection percentages generally declined during MSWO as the number of items decreased across trials.

## **INSTRUCTING AND ASSESSING INDIVIDUALS TO CONDUCT DISCRETE-TRIALS TEACHING: A REVIEW AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS**

**Kendra M. Thomson**, Garry L. Martin, Lindsay Arnal, **University of Manitoba**  
Daniela Fazio **St. Amant Research Centre**  
C. T. Yu, **University of Manitoba and St. Amant Research Centre**

Early intensive behavioral intervention (EIBI) has been identified as the treatment of choice for children with autism spectrum disorders. A common strategy for conducting EIBI is discrete-trials teaching (DTT). There is a demand for research-based, economical, rapid training techniques to teach tutors and parents of children with autism to conduct DTT. A review of 20 experiments that focused on teaching individuals how to conduct DTT illustrated that many different forms of DTT instruction exist, and are often reported briefly which makes replication difficult. Further, evaluations of assessment tools for scoring individuals' DTT performance are lacking. In response to this need, we developed a 21-item component checklist, the Discrete-Trials Teaching Evaluation Form (DTTEF) to assess instructors' DTT performance. The DTTEF has been shown to have high face validity, high interobserver reliability for live scoring, and high concurrent validity with trainees attempting to apply DTT to teach a confederate role-playing a child with autism. The DTTEF differentiated between DTT performances of trainees before and after receiving DTT instruction. Considering the high demand for personnel trained in delivering DTT to children with autism, further research in developing a more standardized method of instructing and assessing individuals' DTT performance is highly warranted.

## **DECREASING INAPROPRIATE TOUCHING BEHAVIOUR DURING MEAL TIME THROUGH DIFFERENTIAL REINFORCEMENT AND PROGRAMMING FOR GENERALIZATION**

**Jason Hiebert** ABA program, St. Amant

James Ediger **Community Residential Program, St. Amant**

Inappropriate social behaviors are among the most frequently identified targets for treatment for individuals with ID/DD. Often Differential Reinforcement (DR) procedures are employed to reduce these behaviors because they are considered to be less invasive and more socially valid than punishment-based procedures. Research has shown that the extinction component inherent in DR schedules is critical for these procedures to be effective. Consequently, DR procedures may have limited utility in situations where extinction is either difficult or not possible.

This poster describes an intervention developed for a 38 year old male living with ID who frequently displayed inappropriate touching (IT) of other people's food, eating utensils, and dishes during meal times. A functional analysis indicated that the client's IT was maintained by positive social reinforcement in the form of reprimands, instructions, and attention from staff and peers that followed instances of the behavior. Extinction (and therefore an effective DR procedure) was not possible during meals because peers and staff were unable or unwilling to refrain from attending to the client when he displayed IT. Treatment involved implementing of a Differential Reinforcement of an Alternative (DRA) schedule and establishing a salient discriminative stimulus ( $S^D$ ) for a more appropriate alternative behaviour (AT: appropriately touching his own objects) during training sessions that occurred in the dining area but not at meal times. Treatment led to a reduction in IT and an increase in AT during training sessions. Generalization of these effects to meal time was achieved by simply introducing the  $S^D$  for the alternative behavior into that situation.

This investigation suggests that DRA procedures can be effective in reducing undesired behaviors in target situations where extinction may be difficult or impossible by treating the behaviour within contexts where extinction is possible and simultaneously programming for the generalization of the alternative behavior in the target situation.

### **Coffee Break**

2<sup>30</sup>-3<sup>40</sup>

### **ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION**

2<sup>40</sup>-3<sup>40</sup>

Providing clinical services in community and school settings can present obstacles for clinicians and clients. These can include, but are not limited to issues of treatment adherence, availability of resources, availability of personnel, and administrative challenges. The round table panel will consist of approximately 4 clinicians and behaviour analysts who will briefly discuss how they have overcome the challenges many face when assessing and treating challenging behaviours in various settings such

as residential, community, and school settings. Following each panel member's discussion, the audience will have an opportunity to discuss the topic by sharing their experiences and asking questions of the discussants and members of the audience in order to gain a better understanding of the strategies used to address this issue.

**BEHAVIOUR ANALYSIS AWARDS**

3<sup>40</sup>-3<sup>50</sup>

**CLOSING REMARKS**

3<sup>50</sup>-4<sup>00</sup>

A SPECIAL THANKS TO THE ST AMANT ABA PROGRAM  
FOR SUPPORTING THEIR STAFF IN ATTENDING THIS  
EVENT





**Manitoba Association for Behaviour Analysis (MABA)**

**4<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference Registration**

October 24, 2009

University of Manitoba Winnipeg, Manitoba

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Middle Initial: \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Affiliations: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/Prov or State/ Postal Code or ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Please note that unless otherwise stated, all correspondence from MABA to registrants will be via e-mail.**

Conference Fees

Members*			Non-members		
<b>Early Registration by August 31, 2009</b>					
Non presenter	Poster Presenter	Student	Non presenter	Poster Presenter	Student
<input type="checkbox"/> \$15.00	<input type="checkbox"/> \$10.00	<input type="checkbox"/> \$10.00	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25.00	<input type="checkbox"/> \$15.00	<input type="checkbox"/> \$15.00
<b>Registration after August 31, 2009</b>					
Non presenter	Poster Presenter	Student	Non presenter	Poster Presenter	Student
<input type="checkbox"/> \$20.00	<input type="checkbox"/> \$12.00	<input type="checkbox"/> \$15.00	<input type="checkbox"/> \$35.00	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25.00	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25.00

\*You must be a current member of MABA to be eligible for member conference fees. If you have not paid your 2009 membership fee and would like to become a member, also download and complete the membership application form [www.maba.ca](http://www.maba.ca)

Please mail this form with cheque or money order to: **Janelle Valcourt**  
 440 River Road  
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**EARLY REGISTRATION DEADLINE: August 31, 2009**

Donations

I would like to make a donation by the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to the MABA Conference by sponsoring:

- A Key Note Speaker
- A student
- MABA

# MABA

4<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference  
Manitoba Association for  
Behaviour Analysis

Winnipeg, Saturday October 24, 2009

## CALL FOR PAPERS

Go to our website at [www.maba.ca](http://www.maba.ca) for the submissions form and  
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by October 2, 2009

**DEADLINE HAS BEEN EXTENDED**

**Keynote Speaker:**

Dr. Jennifer McComas, University of Minnesota

**Invited Speaker:**

Dr. John Rapp, St Cloud State University

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