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President's message EABA Newsletter

By Zuilma Gabriela Sigurðardóttir

It is with great pleasure that I present this issue of the EABA newsletter. However, this being the last one during my presidency, I admit that it's a regret blended pleasure.

The second EABA summer program was held in the beautiful city of Cádiz, Spain. ABA Spain and the University of Cádiz organized and hosted it. One hundred attendees from 36 countries participated. Thank you so much Javier Virues Ortega, Ricardo Pellón, José I. Navarro Guzman for leading the effort. Thanks to all who supported the summer program either by giving talks, offering workshops, providing technical or financial support, attending, entertaining, etc. Thank you all for your valuable contributions. Videos of invited talks are on Youtube <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vo>

[LNu-uD8wA](#) I encourage all who are interested in organizing and hosting our next summer program to start looking at the possibility of doing so. EABA will call for applications very soon.

EABA will award two European students for their behaviour analytic research a 500 US dollars grant from the B. F. Skinner Foundation. Students are encouraged to apply. Further information is available here: <http://europeanaba.org/home/news/b-f-skinner-foundation-research-award-for-students-in-europe/>

The EABA board has now started the poll for two new members of the board, i.e., to the positions of EABA president and treasurer. Karola Dillenburger, who has served as treasurer the last 4 years, finishes her second term and will be leaving the

board. Karola has done a fantastic job and we are very obliged to her for her dedication, vigilant eye, and time. Thank you Karola ☺☺☺☺☺

EABA Newsletter Contents

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Year 7, issue 1, Summer
Edited by the European Association
for Behaviour Analysis

EABA Summer School

Cádiz, Spain



Opening ceremony led by the organizing committee from ABA Spain and The University of Cádiz

Flamenco show

Attendants in Cádiz

Presenters

93 attended the EABA summer school 2017

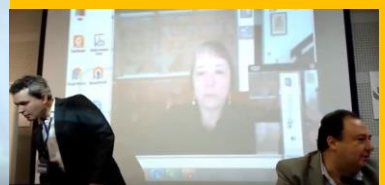
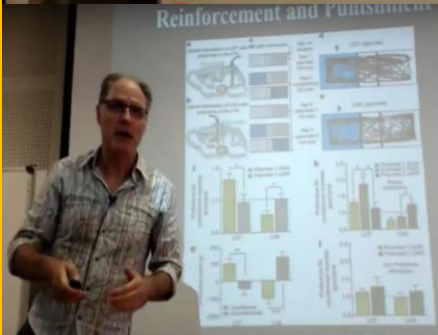
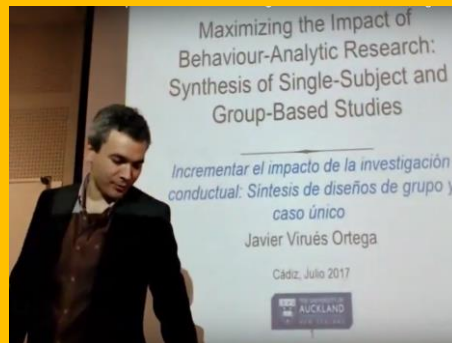
50% were from Spain, 22% from the USA, including some from Latin America, the rest were from the UK, Germany, Denmark, Belgium, France, and Norway

In addition, 34 attended through the streaming facilities. Most of those were from Greece, some from Spain, Italy, Germany, and the USA

THANK YOU TO ALL FOR PARTICIPATING

THANK YOU ABA SPAIN AND UNIVERSITY OF CÁDIZ

GREAT JOB!!!



Next EABA event:



**9th Conference
of the European Association
for Behaviour Analysis (EABA)**

Sept 19-22, 2018, in Würzburg, Germany

 **eaba** european association
for behaviour analysis

FH^W-S University of Applied Sciences
Würzburg-Schweinfurt

MARK YOUR CALENDARS AND JOIN US



Invited speakers:

Mark A. Mattaini, DSW, associate professor, Jane Addams College of Social Work, University of Illinois at Chicago

James Todd, PhD, professor, Eastern Michigan University

Maurice Feldman, PhD, professor, Brock University

Sigurður Óli Sigurðsson, PhD, Manager of the Quality Board for higher education in Iceland, The Icelandic Centre for Research

Carol Pilgrim, PhD, professor and associate dean, University of North Carolina Wilmington

Nancy Marchand-Martella, PhD, professor and department chair, University of Oklahoma

Andrea Kuebler, PhD, professor, University of Würzburg



Elections 2017 for EABA board

For president we have two candidates: Dr. Erik Arntzen and Dr. Mickey Keenan

Dr. Erik Arntzen



Dr. Erik Arntzen received his Ph.D. from University of Oslo, Norway, in February 2000. Arntzen's dissertation focused on variables that influenced responding in accordance with stimulus equivalence. He also holds a degree in clinical psychology. He is currently a full-time Professor in Behavior Analysis at Oslo and Akershus University College (OAUC). His research contributions include both basic and applied behavior analysis, with an emphasis on research in relational stimulus control and verbal behavior. Lately, he has started a research project with a focus on remembering functions in patients with dementia. He has also been interested in ethical considerations and core values in the field of behavior analysis. Furthermore, he has ongoing research projects within the areas of gambling behavior and consumer behavior. He also runs a Behavior Analysis Lab at OAUC. Dr. Arntzen has published papers in a number of different journals including Journal of the Experimental Analysis of Behavior (JEAB), Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis (JABA), The Psychological Record, Behavioral Interventions, European Journal of Behavior Analysis (EJOBA), Experimental of Analysis of Human Behavior Bulletin, Analysis of Gambling Behavior, the Analysis of Verbal Behavior, American Journal of Alzheimer's Disease & other Dementias, and Psychopharmacology. Dr. Arntzen has served as the president and past-president of the European ABA (2008–2014). Dr. Arntzen has been a member of the board of the Norwegian Association for Behavior Analysis from 1987–1993 and from 2006 to present, holds the position as the secretary of international affairs. Dr. Arntzen is a trustee of Cambridge Center for Behavioral Studies. He has presented papers at conferences worldwide. Dr. Arntzen has been recognized with awards, including the SABA award for the dissemination of behavior analysis, ABAI award for outstanding mentoring, the research award at Akershus University College, and publication award at OAUC. Dr. Arntzen is one of the founders and the editor of European Journal of Behavior Analysis. He has also served as the editor of Behavior & Philosophy. He has served on the editorials board of several journals, including the Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis, The Psychological Record, International Journal of Psychology and Psychological Therapy, American Journal of Alzheimer's Disease, the Behavior Analyst, and The Behavior Analyst Today.

Relevant experience

I received my Ph.D. from University of Oslo, Norway, and I am currently a full-time Professor in Behavior Analysis at Akershus University College (AUC), where I coordinate the master courses in behavior analysis which are the prerequisites for a BACB examination. My research interests include both basic and applied behavior analysis, with an emphasis on research in relational stimulus control, verbal behavior, and conceptual issues. I have served on the editorials board of several journals, including the Journal of the Experimental Analysis of Behavior, Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis, The Psychological Record, International Journal of Psychology and Psychological Therapy, and The Behavior Analyst Today. I have been a member of the board of the Norwegian Association for Behavior Analysis from 1987–1993 and from 2006 to present I have served the position as the secretary of international affairs. The Norwegian Association has an annual conference with approximately 800 attendees and is the biggest behavior analysis organization per capita outside of ABA International.

Commitment to EABA

I have attended to most of the EABA meetings and was part of the group of people who founded the EABA in Venice in 2001. I have also served as the president and the past-president of EABA from 2008–2014. I have the position as the editor of the European Journal of Behavior Analysis (EJOBA) and have had this position from the journal was founded in 2000. I believe that EJOBA has been essential for the dissemination of behavior analysis in Europe and will continue to publish high-quality research from scholars worldwide.

Contributions to EABA

I know the organization, since I have served as a president, which is an advantage and also experience serving as a president of the organization. My main contribution to this organization will be to ensure that all dimensions of behavior analysis (theoretical/conceptual, experimental, applied and service delivery) are in focus. It is hard to specify an exact number of hours for EABA work, but I assume that in average 12–15 hours per month will be an estimate.

EABA and its current direction, suggestions for taking EABA forward

My vision would be to continue to work for EABA as a democratic European organization that can act as an umbrella organization. Furthermore, that EABA would help to unite and support the national member organizations. I believe EABA can further develop behavior analysis across Europe by fostering collaboration with other behavior analysis organizations, developing electronic resources, hosting vibrant European meetings. I am concerned about continuing and developing the relationship with European organizations as Experimental Analysis of Behavior Group (EABG) and international organizations as Association for Behavior Analysis International (ABAI).



EABA has many to thank for where it is now and if elected I will continue with the vision we all share of having Behaviour Analysis become a recognised discipline across Europe. However, I believe we need to be more strategic in how we get there. Currently, we have only one government in Europe that recognises Behaviour Analysis as a discipline, the Czech Republic, and it has directly funded the development of Masters level training. Although I have been involved in helping to make this happen, it has been driven primarily by parents. I believe EABA needs to become more cognisant of the role of parent power in demanding training in Behaviour Analysis at Masters level. This is not to argue that there has to be primarily an autism focus, but it is crazy not to use the opportunities afforded by the demand for behaviour analysis to help establish training opportunities for universities in all European countries. If elected I would seek to provide focused support for parents, as we did in the Czech Republic. EABA can also learn from successful strategies adopted by parents so we need to create avenues for sharing and broadcasting these successes. Sharing at a more general level is also something I want to encourage. For example, there is no laboratory manual that new teachers can turn to when they have to run a laboratory practical. That's a crazy situation for a science to be in. With so many experienced researchers in EABA, we could collate examples of teaching gambits that can be adapted to suit a variety of teaching contexts. Students also could be encouraged to share examples of their work. International relations outside of Europe also could be addressed. There are still behaviour analysts working in isolation who might be helped by working groups targeting funding for international travel and even mentoring. Colleagues outside of Europe also need to become more aware of damage being done by private companies selling their services in Europe and promoting these services ahead of promoting ABA. It only makes the task more difficult for governments to understand what they should be investing in. To conclude, I want to see more evidence of science at work in the way we struggle to address the uptake of behaviour analysis across Europe.

I am a Prof. of Behaviour Analysis at the School of Psychology, Ulster University, and a Fellow of the British Psychological Society. I am also visiting Prof. at Masaryk University in the Czech Republic and I helped to establish the first Masters course in Behaviour Analysis in the Czech Republic. I have a record of over 60 publications in a wide range of areas including both lab-based and community-based research. For my community work in helping parents of children with autism I have received numerous awards including the Award for Promoting Equality of Opportunity (*The British Psychological Society*), the Distinguished Community Fellowship (*University of Ulster*), the *New York State Association for Behavior Analysis* Personal Achievement Award, Award for Public Service in Behavior Analysis from the *Society for Advancement in Behavior Analysis*, the Michael Hemmingway award from the *BACB*, Award for International Dissemination of Behaviour Analysis from the *Society for the Advancement of Behavior Analysis*, and the first International Advocacy Award from *Autism Speaks*. I am the founder of the registered charity Parent's Education as Autism Therapists (PEAT; www.peatni.org), and a Trustee of the Cambridge Center for Behavioral Studies. I spearheaded the first Masters course in Applied Behaviour Analysis in Ireland at Ulster University and with funding from two European projects I led the development of an online multimedia training course in Behaviour Analysis (www.simplestepsautism.com) that has been translated into nine languages (www.stamppp.com), the most recent one being in the Czech language.

For treasurer we have three candidates (see next page):

Nichola Booth, Ph.D., BCBA, Director of training in PEAT,
Northern Ireland

Nursel Ozkan Gonzalez, M.Ed., BCBA, private practice, France

Hanna Steinunn Steingrimsdóttir, Ph.D., Associate professor, Oslo and
Akershus University College

Dr. Nichola Booth



The skill set that I would bring to the role of treasurer I have honed through my years working within the PEAT organisation. As lead behaviour analyst I am responsible for the supervision of the three other behaviour analysts within alongside me. I have also been involved in lobbying with local politicians and health professionals as well as being the media spokesperson for the organisation. These different roles have given me many different skills that I would feel would benefit the role of treasurer within EABA. Over the years I have been involved in organising a number of conferences in collaboration with the local universities which has helped develop my organisational skills.

I am a strong believer in the promotion of the science in Europe. We have so many passionate individuals here and a growing body of support from parents and legislators that I believe that I can help build on this if I were treasurer. With the strong links that I have built through my work with PEAT with Ulster University, Queens University Belfast and the European partners of Simple Steps I believe that as a group we can help further disseminate our great science ensuring that any individual who wishes to access behaviour analytic services can do so. Momentum in the science is growing and I believe as a cohesive group across Europe, EABA can help ensure the ABA is the treatment of choice for both health and education.

If I were successful in becoming EABA treasurer I will fulfil the duties to the best of my ability. I will also endeavour to ensure that the social media presence (particularly on Twitter) is raised so that the successes of the European Behaviour Analysts is shared as frequently as those by our American peers. I could reasonably dedicate a half-day per week to the organisation with additional support provided when required.

Nursel Ozkan Gonzalez



My relocation to France after my American ABA and Special Education experience was not an easy professional transition. Since, I have discovered how we (Europeans) are behind of time compared to the USA, and how much we (ABA professionals) owe to each and every person who contributed to the dissemination of ABA in the places where children and adults can access to the best and latest behavioral practices through public services. I am convinced that the future of the Science of Applied Behavior Analysis and its future accessibility to people in Europe depends on collective efforts. I found the African quote “Alone you go faster, together you go further” very meaningful and complete to convey my point of view about how I value “joint efforts”, and “collaboration” more than individual achievements in this particular matter. On top of my responsibilities as a treasurer; please find below some of the objectives that I'd be interested to work towards under the EABA roof and with European ABA devotees.

- Contribute and promote the translation of “must read” articles and books in ABA
- Finding ways to provide high quality ABA trainings (at different levels) easily accessible (remotely) in different languages without it being too costly for trainees across Europe
- Contribute to the creation of a multi-lingual website where basic ABA resources and information are publicly shared
- Putting in place some reinforcing contingencies to create establishing operations for contributing to the EABA community and the dissemination of ABA
- Having representatives and active devotees in “Ethics”, “Politics/Economics”, and “Dissemination” at each European Country which could work on common objectives when appropriate and develop tools and strategies

Dr. Hanna Steinunn Steingrímisdóttir



It is a great opportunity for me to be able to be part of the European Association for Behavior Analysis and I am truly interested in contributing to the work of advocating the science of behavior analysis. On a personal level, being part of the EABA committee will expand my professional network where I can learn more about the work of other behavior analysts. Learning more about the work of behavior analysts and getting insights in the organization will allow me to assist in the dissemination of behavior analysis in Europe and advocate for adequate education and training for those who want to work within our field. I truly believe that the European organization is an important arena for those working within the field of behavior analysis in Europe by providing information about education and training in behavior analysis and provide an arena for discussion to take place. In that regard, the congresses held by EABA are highly important as they allow scholars, researchers, and practitioners to meet and discuss matters related to behavior analysis in Europe. Also, the summer school is another great arena for those interested in our field. In the summer school, the participants meet other scholars working within the field, share their ideas and learn from each other. Therefore, I will contribute to the work that needs to be done for the congress to take place, participating in monthly meetings and necessary work in between meetings. As a treasurer, I will collect membership fees and take care of conference registration, I will also be willing to assist on other tasks. I believe I can contribute to the further work and development of EABA in collaboration with other EABA board members, expanding the current goals and directions. As my research interest is on working with older adults and older adults with neuro cognitive disorders, and as a secretary of the Behavioral Gerontology Special Interest group of ABAL, I would like to contribute to the EABA by bringing some attention to behavioral gerontology. I will do my very best if elected.

Please vote before August 29th, 2017 (a link to the polling website has been sent to all voting members – if you haven't received the link, please make sure that you are a current full member of EABA and contact secretary@europeanaba.org).

The 2017 B. F. Skinner Foundation Research Award for Students in Europe

Application Deadline: September 15, 2017

The B. F. Skinner Foundation sponsors this award for student research. Two awards of \$ 500 each are available. Winners will be given the award at the European Association of Behaviour Analysis (EABA) biannual conference.

PURPOSE OF THE AWARD

- To support and encourage research efforts in behaviour analysis among students in Europe
- To promote behaviour analytic science
- To boost the overall quality of academic research in behaviour analysis
- To provide recognition for students conducting behaviour analytic research

CRITERIA

1. Applicants must be attending an undergraduate or graduate-level program in Europe. Applications will be evaluated without respect to the applicant's level of education.
2. Applicants must be members of EABA.
3. The proposal must be for a student-driven research project, thesis or dissertation approved by their department of study.
4. Applicants do not have to be in a behaviour analytic graduate program, but the research must be behaviour analytic in nature. Consideration will be given to proposals that describe research with a focus on observable and measurable behaviour (or the products thereof) as the dependent variable and the manipulation of well-defined environmental events as independent variables. Both applied and basic research proposals are encouraged. Applied research proposals should correspond to the guidelines suggested by Baer, Wolf, and Risley (1968, 1987). Basic research proposals should correspond to the criteria set forth in Sidman (1960/1988). Those submitting proposals are encouraged to look to the Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis or the Journal of the Experimental Analysis of Behavior for examples of behaviour analytic research. Applied research applicants should describe the basic science roots of their work and basic science applicants the translational aspects of their work.

IN ORDER TO BE ACCEPTED, THE PACKET MUST CONTAIN:

1. A cover letter with the student's contact information, where they are attending school, their program of study, and what they intend to do with the award. The award can be used for almost anything, but preference will be given to direct research-related use, such as equipment, software, paying data collectors, purchasing reinforcers for participants, etc. For equipment or software, explain how it will be used in the research project. EABA does not fund conference attendance for presentation of the award. (One page.)
2. A letter of support from a supervising faculty. The letter should attest to the fact that the research is replicating/expanding knowledge in the field of behaviour analysis.
3. An Abstract (500 words or fewer), outlining their research project.
4. An Introduction indicating why this research is important, how it relates to Baer et al. (1968, 1987) or Sidman (1960/1988), some supporting literature, and the research question. (No more than 3 pages.)
5. A Methods section indicating the design (ABAB, multiple baseline, etc.), the number of proposed participants, from where the participants will be recruited, the general timeline of the research, and

an overview of the procedures that will be used. Exacting details are not needed, but the reviewer should be able to determine the feasibility of the study from the information provided. (No more than 3 pages.)

SUBMISSION PROCEDURES

1. The materials including the cover letter, Abstract, Introduction, Methods, and References sections must be sent as a Word email attachment to Christos Nikopoulos' c.nikopoulos@autismconsultancyservices.co.uk (applied research) or torunn.lian@hioa.no (basic research).
2. The Abstract, Introduction, and Methods sections must be double-spaced, in a manuscript 12-point font (such as Times New Roman) with margins set at 2.5 cm.
3. The entire email packet should not exceed 9 pages, including the reference page.
4. The faculty letter of support should be sent to c.nikopoulos@autismconsultancyservices.co.uk (applied research) or torunn.lian@hioa.no (basic research), from the supporting professor's email address.

REFERENCES

- Baer, D. M., Wolf, M. M., & Risley, T. R. (1968). Some current dimensions of applied behavior analysis. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis, 1*(1), 91-97. doi: 10.1901/jaba.1987.20-313
- Baer, D. M., Wolf, M. M., & Risley, T. R. (1987). Some still-current dimensions of applied behavior analysis. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis, 20*(4), 313-327. doi: 10.1901/jaba.1987.20-313
- Sidman, M. (1960/1988). *Tactics of scientific research: Evaluating experimental data in psychology*. New York, NY: Basic Books. Boston, MA: Authors Cooperative (reprinted).

2016 award winners:



Anastasia Salma, Greece



Ruth Kopperud, Norway

ABA education in Croatia – how it all started

In 2010 one mother approached Prof. Jasmina Frey Skrinjar, from the Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation Sciences (ERF) at the University of Zagreb. The mother told her about the experience she had of Dr. Neil Martin, (who is now the Director of International Development for the Behaviour Analyst Certification Board) and how he helped her son and their family. Although her son was not in need of an intervention any more, she was very enthusiastic and motivated to help ABA become available in Croatian for all children and families that needed it. She had clearly approached the right person because Prof. Frey Skrinjar has significantly developed the field of autism spectrum disorder in Croatia, she had received an education on behavioural approaches (at the Institute of Psychiatry, University of London, British Postgraduate Medical Federation – Maudsley Hospital), has experience of behavioural approaches among others and developed a course on behavioural approaches for her students, future masters of education and rehabilitation sciences. She was aware that thorough ABA education was not available and that only students from the Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation Sciences had some competencies although the need for ABA professionals was obvious.



University of Zagreb



Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation Services

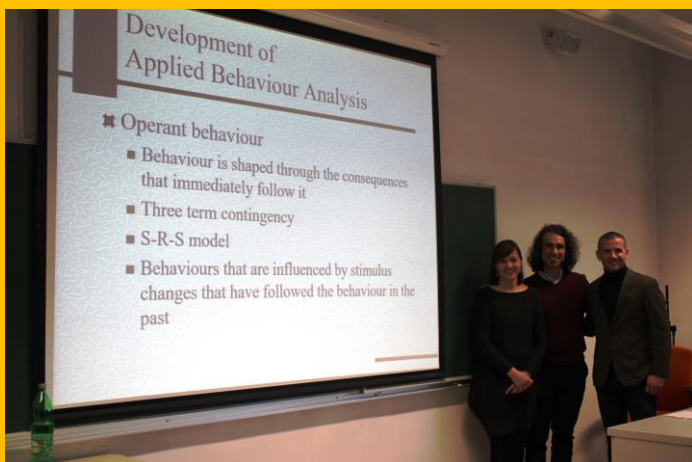
Thus, a mother and a professional together, started to explore the best way to bring an ABA education to Croatia. After a long and hard travel through administration and with intensive communication with Dr. Neil Martin, a BCaBA course for 22 students started in 2012 with Dr. Neil Martin as a lecturer. It was organized through the Center for Lifelong Learning of the Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation Sciences, at the University of Zagreb. Students were very motivated and hard working. Most of them had to pay for the education themselves as they didn't have any support from their institutions; ABA was not recognized as an important approach by the professionals in Croatia. Students successfully finished the course but unfortunately, after that experience, the effort to get the BCaBA certificate was too much for them, since it did not change their position on their work nor did it provide them with any advantage in other potential jobs. In the meantime, false ABA therapists deceived parents as the latter had no options for genuine ABA treatment. Lots of them travelled to other countries to get ABA treatment, lots of families were

separated with one parent traveling with a child with ASD whilst the other parent was staying at home with their other children. And false treatments flourished...

With time, a lot of parents, professionals, and institution administrators have come to recognize that ABA is an important treatment and in 2015, Dr. Neil Martin was contacted again. He continued to express support for the development of ABA in Croatia and recommended Dr. Christos Nikopoulos as the leader of establishing the necessary education towards a BCaBA/BCBA certificate (BACB VSC). The situation has changed since 2012, more institutional administrators support professionals to seek education, they recognize the need for development of ABA services. And what is valuable is that a lot of students seeking certification come from state programs and will be able to deliver ABA within their institutions; so ABA will not only be a privilege of those that can afford it!



Christos and Neven signing the contract for the VCS



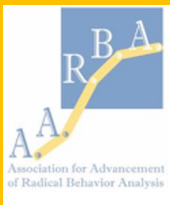
Jasmina, Neven, and Christos



Cohort

The new education has started with the great effort, understanding, and openness of Dr. Christos Nikopoulos who has shown understanding of the sometimes slow administration, considered circumstances of participants in Croatia, and shown true motivation to make a difference in availability of services for children and their families. Twenty-nine (29) highly motivated, hardworking participants have just attended their 4th weekend of education and they will, hopefully, together with parents, become the future advocates of ABA!

Jasmina Stošić, PhD
University of Zagreb, Croatia
Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation Sciences



Conference on Applied Behavior Analysis

Rome – Italy, June 14th and 15th, 2017

In the marvellous surroundings of the Pontificia Urbaniana University in Rome, our annual Conference of Applied Behavior Analysis took place. Organized by AARBA and AIAMC, the two reference associations for Behavior Analysis in Italy, members of EABA and, starting from this year *Associate Chapters* of ABA International, the conference has seen the attendance of over 500 participants.

The conference was divided in: the Behavioral Psychotherapy organized by AIAMC; and the 11th European Conference on Behavior Based Safety and Performance Management, run by AARBA and sponsored by Heineken International.

The public lectures of the 4 international speakers - Timothy Ludwig of the Appalacchian State University, Lori Diener-Ludwig of Performance BluePrints, Julie Smith of ChangePartner and Ulrike Leuken of the University Hospital Wurzburg - were accompanied by those of the Italian speakers and by the practical experiences of HSE managers and director of some of the companies that have introduced behavioral management system.

More specifically, the Oncologic Center of Aviano (CRO) and the Salvator Mundi International Hospital have presented the results achieved by the BBS protocol in their facilities in order to reduce clinical risk and hazardous behaviors related to medical assistance, while national and international firms like Ahlstrom-Munksjö, Sarlux, Mitsubishi Electric Hydronics & IT Cooling Systems, GE Grid Solutions, Heineken Italia and Marcegaglia, have presented their practical experiences, the results achieved, the problems encountered, the active inclusion of workers and leaders in the safety process and the cultural change that BBS brings inside companies.

Furthermore, several topics related to Behavior Analysis's clinical applications were discussed at the Conference, including ABA applications for autistic children and behavioral techniques for psychotherapy (e.g. behavioral activation). In general, the application of the scientific method to the processes of human behavior change received a lot of attention.

The increasing importance that the Behavior Analysis is gaining in the European context and across the Italian institutions is shown by the wide range of participants and companies attending, and especially by the interventions of Maurizio Sacconi, former Italian Minister of Labour and current President of the Senate Labour Committee, and Emilia Grazia De Biasi, President of the Senate Hygiene and Healthcare Committee.

The President of the Italian Republic, Sergio Mattarella, also honored the Conference with a commemorative medal, reflecting the crucial role of the discipline in the Italian society.

The Italian associations for behavior analysis, AARBA and AIAMC, recognized worldwide and encouraged by the success of the initiative, will continue pursuing their mission: spreading Behavior Analysis in Italy and in Europe.

See you all in 2018 for the next conference!

Fabio Tosolin
President of AARBA

Aristide Saggino
President of AIAMC



Interview with Dr. Ieva Bite, clinical psychologist and CBT psychotherapist, associate professor in psychology at the University of Latvia.

By Zuilma Gabriela Sigurðardóttir



Thank you Dr. Bite for accepting to be interviewed for the EABA newsletter. I appreciate your time.

1) Can you tell us a little about the history of behavior analysis in Latvia?

During Soviet times, Latvia was one of the countries where there was no opportunity to study psychology – neither as a science, nor as a way to become a practitioner. Some pioneers in psychology in Latvia were able to enroll in psychology studies in Moscow or Leningrad, but there was no training of psychologists or psychotherapists in Latvia until 1989. Pharmacology was the only treatment method in psychiatry (unfortunately it still strongly dominates). The educational system was based on grades and punishment for those who did not do well, no help was available to those with special needs... This legacy still persists in our country, at least to some extent.

Behavioral and cognitive approaches to treatment appeared fairly quickly in Latvia after the initiation of the first study program in psychology at the University of Latvia in the early 90-ties. At this time, along with colleagues who had studied in Moscow or Leningrad, several psychologists arrived from the USA and brought with them their experience with cognitive and behavioral principles. Sandra Sebre, PhD, now professor of psychology in the University of Latvia, returned to Latvia with basic training in CBT. Janis Grants, CBT psychotherapist, and a radical behaviorist in his heart, after long-term practice with head injury patients in the USA, travelled to the University of Latvia twice a year to give an introduction to CBT to master's students in psychology. He also assisted with the supervision process in the training of CBT therapists. Due to joint team efforts, education in clinical psychology was established in Latvia, and it is still the largest branch of psychology in the country although psychology as a profession has not just recently been recognized. Another important impetus was provided by Paul Salkovskis, UK citizen with paternal Latvian roots, who came to Latvia in 1994 and 2006 to give presentations on the treatment of phobias, OCD, and exposure therapy at conferences for psychologists.

Still, with psychological science at its very beginning stages, along with huge political and economic changes, poverty and instability, the society in Latvia continued to be full of magic and mystical thinking. People with severe physical and mental illnesses continued seeking help to witches and “extrasenses”. Meanwhile, various branches of psychotherapy were also developing since Latvia's regaining of independence in 1992. Psychodynamic psychotherapy was the most predominant in the early 90-ties, but several other therapeutic schools also prevailed, for example:

Psychodrama, existential therapy, psycho-organic analysis, and gestalt-therapy. The training of behavioral and cognitive psychotherapists was initially left somewhere aside despite the efforts made by pioneers who brought ideas and methods from the USA.

In 2009 several psychologists and psychiatrists established the Society of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy with the aim of initiating and promoting the training of CBT psychotherapists. That same year I participated in the EABCT Congress and made contacts with several CBT training authorities. Within the framework of a professional doctoral study program, the first module of CBT training was established at the University of Latvia. In parallel, other CBT training seminars begun, with psychiatrist Gints Polis as a coordinator. These two training programs soon became integrated. Among the teachers who participated in the CBT training were Eduardo Keegan (Argentina), Thomas Kalpakoglou (Greece), Mark Reinecke (USA), Agnieszka Popiel (Poland), Jan Prasko (Czech Republic), Maie Kreegipuu (Estonia).

A specific focus on behavioral treatments started in 2014 with an emphasis on treatment approaches for children with behavioral problems. The antecedent to that is that in 2013, at the EABCT congress in Marrakesh, I met a child behavioral therapist Wim de Mey from the University of Ghent in Belgium who presented about impressive group work with preschool age children with behavior problems. We decided to implement his program in Latvia, it is called "STOP 4-7". Looking for funding to implement the project, we had to find partners from Northern countries, and Wim recommended that I would contact you, Zuilma Gabriela Sigurðardóttir – without yet understanding who you were, I wrote to you and you applied and received Erasmus funding to travel to Latvia to teach us about behavior analysis – this year you visited Latvia for the third time, and you have taught us behavior principles and how they are applied to solve behavioral problems, you have also taught us about evidence based teaching methods in general and for learning disabilities, and about single case experimental methodology, all on a voluntary basis. You plan to continue travelling to Latvia to teach masters and doctoral level students and perhaps continue providing supervision to professionals working with families and children without receiving any compensation.

Also, I have to mention the growing recognition in Latvia for the necessity of behavioral approaches for treatment of children with autism, which has started to develop only very recently. Ten years ago, the diagnosis of autism almost didn't exist in Latvia; and parents who had children with symptoms of autism were invited to contact magicians, use homeopathy, use ride-therapy, sand-play therapy, expose their children to dolphins, or to just use medication... Five years ago Virginia Juskevičiūte, BCaBA from Lithuania, who has experience and education from the UK, started to visit Latvia regularly to help people to work with children with ASD and other developmental disorders with ABA. In August of 2017, with the help of BCBA Maija Graudina from the USA, as well as Neil Martin from the UK, we will start the first ABA training program in Latvia. Already around 10 professionals are participating in different ABA training programs from Russian, via the internet. Still, the government, municipalities, and insurance companies do not fund any ABA treatments yet, therefore we have to work a lot to develop these services, and establish government funding for them.

- 2) I am curious about the status of behavior analysis in Latvia. Can you summarize what the status is?

We are presently in the process of establishing The Association of Behavior Analysis with encouragement from you, and it will soon be registered at the National Register of Organizations. Regarding legal status, it's a slow process in all areas. The law on psychologists was finally passed only this year; and the profession of psychotherapist was included in the Classification of Professions' for the first time this year. All the ABA students (as there are no BCBA's yet in Latvia) are either psychologists, pedagogues, or psychology students. In the academic field, only just very recently, after our activities of the last years, people have started to recognize behavior analysis as a really valuable instrument, but, I think, mostly in the applied field.

- 3) Has anyone field of behavior analysis (ideology/philosophy, the basic science, the applied science, service delivery) developed or will any field develop more than the others? If so, why do you think this happened that way?

I think not yet. Everything is just at the beginning. Service delivery has begun for a few children with autism and for children's behavior problems, but this is also mostly a private initiative by very few individuals, and we hope for some governmental support in the nearest future.

- 4) Are there any undergraduate courses on behavior analysis being taught in Latvia? And if so, where and in what departments, i.e., psychology, education, others?

No, there are no special courses in any university in Latvia on behavior analysis. Information about behaviorism and learning principles are included within the content of different courses: e.g., introduction to psychology, clinical psychology, history of psychology, psychotherapy theories and methods.

- 5) Are there any graduate programs in universities in Latvia that emphasize behavior analysis? If so, where and in what departments?

We have CBT and clinical psychology modules in our doctoral degree program at the University of Latvia – there, of course, we apply behavior science and teach about behavioral practices. Also at the psychology master’s degree level there is a general emphasis on CBT and behavioral treatment approaches.

- 6) What has been the biggest threshold to the development of behavior analysis in Latvia?

The first problem is the huge void in the development of psychology and training of clinical psychologists during the Soviet times. National and local governmental decision makers did not include funding for psychologists in their budgets for most years. It is very slowly changing now, but still we are far from implementing good therapeutic practices in Latvia. Psychotherapy is not funded by the state, municipalities or insurance policies (except in some very few cases). In schools, psychological counselling is available, but offered by very few psychologists and they have almost no education in behavior analysis and have not received any training on application of behavior analysis in schools.

- 7) What do you think has to happen so that behavior analysis can flourish in Latvia?

We have to raise public awareness about evidence based treatments, of learning principles, as well as the general importance of behavior analysis as a science. We also have to develop research projects employing single case experimental methodology.

Of course, inclusion of behavior analysis in the university programs would help a lot. According to BCBA standards, within a 5 year period we will include a BCBA approved course sequence at the University of Latvia as a continuing education program for those who already have a master’s degree. Probably, a master’s degree in behavior analysis can be established also but we need time to prepare it and establish it.

Actually, this is a “good time”, or opportunity, to advocate for a program in behavior analysis as it has been just confirmed that 40 of 70 special schools will be closed soon to give way to the new policy in Latvia of inclusive education. However, teachers and schools are not ready for that. So, we can let policy makers know that we can give them methods which will be very helpful for them when implementing the new policy.

Dr. Bite’s short bio

Ieva Bite is a clinical psychologist and an associate professor at the University of Latvia. She received her doctoral degree in psychology in 2003 from the same institution. In 2009 she initiated the first systematic cognitive behavior therapy (CBT) training program in Latvia. In 2017 she is starting the first training program in Applied Behavior Analysis in Latvia. Her professional experience includes working in the Crisis intervention centre „Skalbes”, in Riga Psychiatry and Narcology centre, and having a private practice. Her research interests include children’s and adolescent behavior and emotional problems and possibilities for intervention, parent-child interactions, child abuse and violence towards children, domestic violence, psychoemotional disorders in adulthood, as well as behavioral and cognitive therapies.



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News from the EABA Community

From our members

- EABA currently has 115 members from 28 countries: 64 full members, 36 student members and 14 affiliate members
- Join us on Facebook and Twitter (@AbaEuropean).

Upcoming ABA Events in Europe

In December

The Hellenic Community for Behavior Analysis calls for papers for its 3rd biannual conference, to be held on the campus of Panteion University, in Athens, on the 9th and 10th of December, 2017. The scientific program will feature interventions by Paul Andronis, Katerina Dounavi, T. V. Joe Lang, Neil Martin, and Ioannis Moustakis. Please visit www.behaviorism.panteion.gr for submission and event details.

Kudos

for EABA members accomplishments

Dr. Martti Tuomisto is now a certified behavior analyst, the only one in Finland. Congratulations Martti, BCBA-D. We hope there will be many more who will follow in your footsteps in Finland!!!

Greetings and gratitude from your outgoing president

Dear members of EABA, colleagues, board, ex-members,

it has been a very special pleasure to serve as president of EABA. These two years have passed much too quickly. It feels like it was only a few weeks ago that I accepted the nomination and even fewer since I was voted president. I still feel honoured for the trust this entails. I have found the experience as educational as rewarding. EABA is truly important for the advancement of behavior analysis in Europe and I thank past presidents for their wisdom and dedication to the cause. I wish to thank the EABA board for their guidance, support, and advice from the beginning of my term, for all the hard work and great spirits you bring to our association, it has been my luck to work with all of you and enjoy your comradeship. I also want to thank our affiliate chapters and their members for their cooperation and the EABA members for participating in our events, for reading EJOBA, and for answering our call when we have asked you to assist us. I will still serve EABA as past president for the next two years and look forward to welcoming the next president and working with him.