

Operants

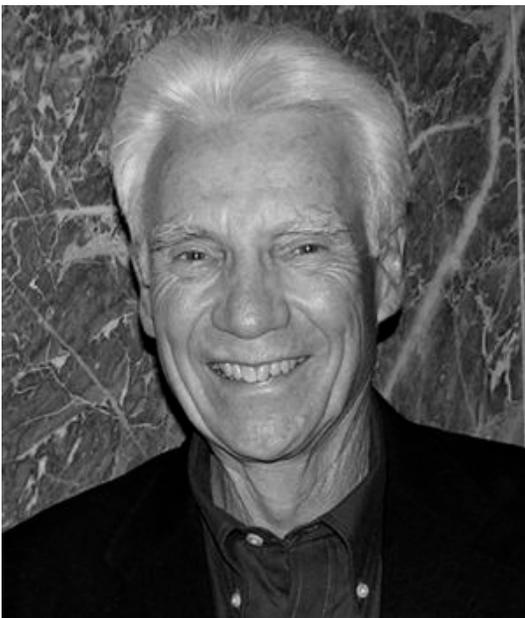
A Newsletter of the B.F. Skinner Foundation

First Quarter 2007, Vol. I



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Dr. Wood (photo courtesy J. Bailey)

Dr. W. Scott Wood:

Celebrating the achievements of a B. F. Skinner Foundation founding member

On Nov. 23, 2006, Dr. W. Scott Wood, a founding member of the B.F. Skinner Foundation, died at the age of 65. Dr. Wood, who was a long-time professor of psy-

chology at Drake University in Des Moines, Iowa, was an important figure in the field of behavioral analysis. He had a particularly vital impact on the Foundation as one of its founding members.

He began his career as a behaviorist at the Arizona State University at Tempe, when in 1962 he decided to pursue the study of psychology instead of his engineering studies. After receiving his ensuing Ph.D. in experimental psychology, Dr. Wood became a major contributor to the development of the midwestern organization of behaviorists. Along with others, he planned a behavioral organization that was independent of American Psychology Association organizations. This action led to the creation of MABA, and ultimately ABA.

Dr. Wood published many papers on the topic of behavior analysis, including reviews of the works of B.F. Skinner, topics on behavior modification, and ethics for behaviorists. His contribution to the field of behavioral analysis extended to his initiating the journal *The Behavior Analyst*, a publication which is now an important part of ABA's contribution to the field. In addition to this journal and his many scholarly papers, Dr. Wood's ongoing professional achievements included being awarded with grants aimed at public service and philanthropic goals. For example, grants from the Iowa Office of Programming and Planning provided state de-institutionalization planning for the developmentally disabled. He directed programs and assisted in other Iowa state programs that aided in the

evaluation of child abuse, mental health systems, and the development of computer-aided courses.

In addition, he was an active community member of a large number of Iowa-based committees and chairs. One such program was the Advisory Committee to the Iowa Gambling Treatment Program, an extension of the Iowa department of Public Health. He chaired this committee from 2001-2002. The psychology of gambling was one of Dr. Woods's areas of interest, along with programmed instruction, and the experimental and applied analysis of behavior.

A close lifelong friend and colleague of Dr. Wood was Dr. Jon Bailey, whom Scott met in the early 1960's at the Arizona State psychology department. Dr. Bailey describes what initially drew him to his friend, and about Dr. Woods's interest in BF Skinner: "Scott was cool, and quick-witted, and very, very smart. He quickly latched on to Jack Michael and began reading B.F. Skinner with a passion. He could quote Skinner on most any topic and did with little provocation. Scott learned more about behaviorism and logical positivism in a year than most of the faculty had ever learned, and was eager to share the power of this knowledge with anyone who would listen. There was a humor and a certain disdain in the way he would respond in class that

made us all chuckle; me in particular. I couldn't help myself. It was just so damn funny the way he would make a point and then kind of look away and grin and I just laughed out loud, which really irritated certain professors with less intelligence and no sense of humor... Scott could explain complicated phenomena in short order, always consistent with the fundamental operant principles and I would always go away thinking, I've just spent a few minutes with one of the smartest guys in our field, and it would take me back to our graduate student days at Arizona State... I really miss those days and I grieve for my good friend Scott Wood."

Margaret Vaughn, who co-wrote *Enjoy Old Age: A Practical Guide* with B.F. Skinner, was also a close friend and colleague of Dr. Wood. When asked to provide some comments that might illuminate Dr. Wood's personality, she similarly noted Dr. Wood as having a sharp sense of humor. "Scott was [also] loved for his argumentative style, his humor, and for happily serving as a political lightning rod. His politics were corporate America, his smile disarming, and his humor often politically incorrect." She also said that last year, he was working on an ABA archival system, still very much involved in the organization that he worked to establish decades ago. "In one of Scott's last emails to

me, the subject line read: ‘Life, death, infinity—ABA,’” she said.

In his lifetime, Dr. Wood accomplished much. After receiving his Ph.D. in 1968, his participation in—and contributions to—the field of behavioral analysis helped to define its future. Not least was his help in founding the B.F. Skinner Foundation.



Dr. Wood (photo courtesy J. Michael)

President’s Column By Dr. Julie S. Vargas



I first met Scott Wood at a meeting of The Midwestern Association of Behavior Analysis (MABA) in the late 1970s. Then numbering a few more than 1000, The organization had a newsletter, but in 1978 decided to start a journal. The first issue of *The Behavior Analyst* came out with Scott

Wood writing the Editorial column as one of the two co-chairs of the Journal. I was the next editor after Scott (1979-1981), so we interacted quite a bit and became friends as well as colleagues.

A few years after my editorship, ABA, now having dropped “Midwestern” from its name, formed a publications committee. Former editors of *The Behavior Analyst* were asked to be the members of the committee. We were given no assignments other than to come up with ideas of what ABA should do in the area of publications. As I remember it, four of us met at the annual convention, and we decided that a good first project would be to reprint B. F. Skinner’s *The Behavior of Organisms* which had recently gone out of print. Over the academic year, Scott and I and the other members of the committee got estimates of prices for different print runs, and put together a report for the next convention’s ABA council meeting.

The year our proposal was presented, a new committee reporting procedure was instituted. Instead of committee chairs presenting their reports in person, each committee was given a member of Council as a liaison and that council member was to give the committee’s report and recommendations. Our liaison was Jim Johnston. Jim wanted ABA to publish a “Behavioral Abstracts” like the ab-

stracts in psychology. He was not enthusiastic about our publication project. When Scott and I received the council’s reaction, essentially chastising us for picking Skinner’s first book as a project, we were not pleased. Scott and I looked at each other, eyes narrowing. I don’t remember which one of us spoke first, but the words were, “Let’s do it ourselves.” In that instant the B. F. Skinner Foundation was born.

Scott lived in Iowa. He had contacts in a law firm that provided pro bono work for worthy causes, and he worked with the lawyers to draw up the legal papers to found the new non-profit foundation. In 1989 the Foundation was incorporated in Scott’s home state! The first BFS Foundation Board consisted of Scott Wood, Jack Michael, Margaret Vaughan, Ernest Vargas, and me.

Scott’s contributions and suggestions for the Foundation were critical in those early days. I was in frequent contact with him. For several months he could hardly speak while waiting for a lung transplant, but he continued working for the Foundation nevertheless. Finally a lung was available, and his operation was a success. The following years he looked terrific, though I saw him only at the yearly conventions of ABA after he left the Foundation Board. At those conventions we argued over politics, where I was more liberal than he, but our views of life overlapped.

We were outraged by the same misrepresentations of Skinner, and excited by the same spread of skinnerian science. Had Scott not been such a supporter of Skinner's works, the B. F. Skinner Foundation would never have existed. We are all indebted to him.

From Dr. Grace Cho, BFS Foundation Liaison for South Korea: ABA Program Update from South Korea



Grace Cho, Ph.D, is an assistant professor at California State University, Fullerton. She specializes in language, literacy, and academic development. As coordinator of the cross-cultural language academic development certificate program, Dr. Cho teaches courses in language theory and methodology. Dr. Cho is a former elementary school teacher and a cross-cultural specialist. She is trilingual in Korean, Spanish and English.

Dr. Cho has most recently

been involved in establishing a graduate ABA program at Namseoul University in Korea. Having just returned from her trip to Korea, Dr. Cho is pleased to announce that the graduate student recruitment process for the ABA program has been very successful.

Students were recruited for two programs — a certificate program for those who already have masters or doctorate degrees, and a masters program for graduate students. Interestingly, medical doctors and university professors were among the applicants for the certificate program. These applicants have a great interest in ABA, as they feel that a BCBA certificate will help them tremendously in their field.

By request from the Director of the Government Education Department, Dr. Cho presented workshops for elementary and secondary schoolteachers in the Seoul Metropolitan area. These workshops are now mandatory for schoolteachers, and Dr. Cho is currently working with the Director of the Education Department to plan future workshops.

According to Dr. Cho, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is a growing problem in Korea, and teachers there are anxious to learn behavioral intervention approaches to benefit their students with ADHD. Some of the medical doctor ABA applicants, such as pediatricians, showed great

interest in learning about behavioral intervention for their ADHD patients.

Because of the sudden increase of interest in ABA in Korea, Dr. Cho feels that her work at NSU will be extremely beneficial. Dr. Cho would like to thank the officials at NSU for making the graduate ABA program possible, and she looks forward to keeping us all posted on further developments in her program.

New staff members at our Cambridge, Massachusetts office

We're pleased to announce that we have new staff members at the Foundation office in Cambridge, Massachusetts: Anna Zilberberg and Elizabeth McGlinchey. Anna Zilberberg



began work at the B.F. Skinner Foundation in February 2007. She now holds

a part-time administrative position at the Foundation. Anna is also an assistant at the social skills groups at the Advances Learning Center. She is currently pursuing a BA degree in psychology from Wellesley College. Anna came to the United States in 2000 from Gorkij, Russia

where she completed her high school education. She is bilingual in Russian and English, and will assist in writing articles for upcoming issues of the newsletter.

Elizabeth



McGlinchey began her work at the B.F. Skinner Foundation in November 2006 as a part-time administrative assistant.

Elizabeth is a graduate of Carnegie Mellon University and is pursuing a career as an orchestral flutist. She frequently performs with the New World Symphony in Miami, Florida and teaches flute in the Boston area. Elizabeth is the new editor of *Operants*,

3 - who can help part-time up to 20 hours a week (or more)

4 - who is willing to learn new things

5 - who is literate in Apple/Mac applications

There is no age limit. We can sort out hours and days. The volunteer must overlap with current staff, but otherwise the volunteer would work on her or his own.

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2007 Board Meeting

On February 16th and 17th, the B.F. Skinner Foundation's annual Board Meeting was held. This year's board members include Julie Vargas, Ernest Vargas, Karen Pryor, Joe Morrow and Al Murphy.



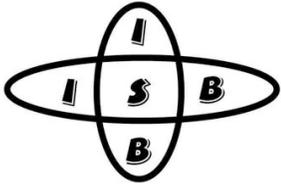
At the 2007 Board Meeting: from L to R, Al Murphy, Joe Morrow, Julie Vargas, Karen Pryor and Ernest Vargas.

Volunteer Support

You can support the B.F. Skinner Foundation by contributing your time. The Foundation is looking for a volunteer in the Boston - Cambridge area, no more than a half hour traveling distance from its office. (Address below.) We're looking for someone:

- 1 - with a background in Skinnerian behavioral science
- 2 - who can be with the B.F. Skinner Foundation for at least two years

The 2007 ISB Convention



The International Society for Behaviorology (ISB) held its 2007 Convention on March 18 - 20 this year. The Convention took place at The Alexis Resort in Las Vegas, Nevada. In celebration of the 50th anniversary of the publication of B.F. Skinner's *Verbal Behavior*, presentations were either focused on or linked to this important work. David Palmer served as the B.F. Skinner Memorial Speaker. Other speakers included, Victoria Fogel, Katherine Johnson, Terry J. Knapp, Theresa McKeon, Joseph E. Morrow, Bill Morse, Henry D. Schlinger, Henry Slucki, Norm Somach, Greg Stikeleather, Joyce C. Tu, Vicci Tucci, Janet S. Twyman, Jerome D. Ulman, E.A. Vargas, and Criss Wilhite.

Auction at CAL-ABA: A Success!

On February 8 - 10 at the California Association for Behavior Analysis, the B.F. Skinner Foundation held an auction. Mark Sundberg served as the Foundation's official auctioneer. The highest bid went toward a

silver cigarette case owned by B.F. Skinner, complete with Skinner's initials engraved on the case.



At the February 2007 CAL-ABA Auction:
Mark Sundberg.



B.F. Skinner Foundation Auction at the February 2007 CAL-ABA convention.

Letter from the Editor

Dear Reader,

This first 2007 issue is not only the beginning of a new year, but also the beginning of a new kind of newsletter for our foundation. Keep an eye out for regular interviews with people in

the fields of behavior analysis and behaviorology, both domestic and international; news from the Foundation's international liaisons; the scholarly exploration of contemporary issues regarding behavior analysis and behaviorology; and reports on the current work of the Foundation, such as seminars, workshops, and fundraisers. If you feel there are topics related to Skinner, behavior analysis, and behaviorology that you would like to see in the newsletter, let us know. We welcome your suggestions for additional article topics.

--Elizabeth McGlinchey, Editor