

2025 Rhode Island Association for Behavior Analysis Conference

Program Details



**12:30pm-1:20pm: Differential Reinforcement Without Extinction:
Current Research, Practice Implications, and Future Directions**

Adam Briggs, Ph.D., BCBA-D



1:30pm-2:20pm: Understanding Behavior-Behavior Relations in Practice

Kenneth W. Jacobs, Ph.D., BCBA-D



**4:00pm-5:00pm: Choice Versus No Choice: Practical Considerations
for Increasing Choices**

Ji Young Kim, Ph.D, BCBA-D



**5:00pm-5:50pm: Applying the Matching Law to Understand and
Improve the Influence of Social Reinforcement**

Sam Morris, Ph.D, BCBA-D

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Registration link: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/riaba-annual-conference-2025-tickets-1130884218139?aff=oddtcreator>



Rhode Island Association for Behavior Analysis Conference

2025 Program Schedule

12:30pm-1:20pm: Differential Reinforcement Without Extinction: Current Research, Practice Implications, and Future Directions

Differential reinforcement of alternative (DRA) behavior is an empirically supported function-based intervention for treating challenging behavior. Typically, DRA teaches the individual to engage in an alternative response to access the functional reinforcer, and the challenging behavior is placed on extinction. Although extinction has been shown to be a critical component in some DRA applications, arranging extinction for challenging behavior may be impractical or unsafe under some conditions. As such, a growing body of research has begun to explore the conditions under which DRA without extinction may be an effective alternative. This approach conceptualizes DRA in a concurrent-operant arrangement and recommends maximizing reinforcement for the alternative response and minimizing reinforcement for the challenging behavior. This presentation aims to (a) orient the audience to the conceptual framework of DRA without extinction, (b) examine the available research literature supporting this approach, (c) review considerations for implementing DRA without extinction in practice, and (d) discuss directions for future research in this area.

Presented by Adam Briggs, Ph.D., BCBA-D



Dr. Adam Briggs is an Associate Professor of Psychology at Eastern Michigan University (EMU). Dr. Briggs directs The Behavior Analysis Research Laboratory at EMU. The lab focuses on research related to (a) improving the safety, efficiency, and validity of functional assessment methods, (b) determining the variables that prevent relapse of challenging behavior and promote maintenance and generalization of treatment effects, and (c) developing effective training strategies for efficiently teaching caregivers and professionals to implement and adhere to behavioral interventions with high procedural fidelity. Dr. Briggs received the 2023 Ronald W. Collins Distinguished Faculty: Research I Award from EMU and the 2024 B. F. Skinner Foundation New Researcher Award from APA Division 25. Both awards recognize the important and innovative work being completed within the lab.

1:30pm-2:20pm: Understanding Behavior-Behavior Relations in Practice

Everyday life is marked by a monotony of behaviors. One behavior leads to the next, and so it goes from waking to sleeping. We work before we play, and we talk to ourselves while doing so. As behavior analysts, we say, "Thinking is behaving" or "Thinking is more behavior to be explained." The causes of thinking behavior, then, are correctly sought within the environment. Stimulus-response accounts explain thinking in terms of antecedent control, while response-stimulus accounts speak in terms of consequential control. This is a principled alternative to mentalism, but it seems to explain away an undeniable lived experience: We think before we act. In other words, our thinking causes other behavior. The purpose of this presentation is to understand our lived experience in terms of a response-response account. Behavior Regulation Theory (BRT) offers the assumptions, terms, and models to understand why one behavior depends upon another. Organisms are said to have a behavioral equilibrium that they seek to attain, preserve, or abandon. This behavioral equilibrium is your average daily screen-time, commute-time, etc. For example, you may seek to abandon your commute-time to re-approach the screen-time you lost while working. All the while you will have talked to yourself. You will have deliberated the costs and benefits of engaging in one behavior over the other. You will have engaged in verbal behavior to regulate your other behavior. BRT will be presented as a way of understanding behavior-behavior relations beyond the simple Premackian example of eating your vegetables before dessert.

Presented by Kenneth W. Jacobs, Ph.D., BCBA-D



Kenneth W. Jacobs, Ph.D., BCBA-D is an Assistant Professor of Psychology at Salem State University. Dr. Jacobs received his doctorate from the University of Nevada, Reno under the mentorship of Linda J. Hayes. He was trained in the theory, philosophy, and experimental analysis of human behavior. Dr. Jacobs has published both theoretical and empirical articles on the status of reinforcement theory in behavior analysis. His current research investigates social media behavior regulation, verbal behavior regulation, and disequilibrium models of behavior regulation. Dr. Jacobs' published works on behavior regulation and disequilibrium can be found in *Behavioural Processes*, *The Psychological Record*, and *Behavior Analysis in Practice*.

2:30pm-4:00pm: Poster Session and Social

4:00pm-5:00pm: Choice Versus No Choice: Practical Considerations for Increasing Choices

Choice involves engaging in a selection response when multiple options are concurrently available. Choices can be incorporated into many components of behavior-analytic treatment such as providing clients with a choice between multiple items, activities, or tasks. We reviewed the main characteristics of 38 behavior-analytic articles that compared choice and no-choice conditions. We coded the experimental arrangements of choice and no-choice conditions and analyzed potential factors affecting preferences for choice and no choice. The findings suggest that the sizing of alternatives from which to choose, the timing of choice opportunities, and the timing of the delivery of the chosen option varied across the studies. Furthermore, preferences for choice shifted with differential reinforcement history and response effort manipulations of choice or no choice. The findings suggest that individual variables should be considered when providing choices, but more research is needed.

Presented by Ji Young Kim, Ph.D., BCBA-D



Dr. Ji Young Kim is an Assistant Professor of Psychology at Penn State Harrisburg and a doctoral-level Board Certified Behavior Analyst. Dr. Kim earned her Ph.D. and M.A. in Applied Behavior Analysis at Teachers College, Columbia University, and her B.A. in Psychology at Barnard College, Columbia University. As a certified general and special education teacher, Dr. Kim worked as a full-time teacher in an inclusion classroom at a K-2 public school with individuals with and without disabilities and their families. Dr. Kim has published in peer-reviewed journals, and her work has been recognized through numerous awards, including the APA Division 25 SEAB Applied Behavior Analysis Dissertation Award, the NYSABA research award for two consecutive years, and the SABA Sidney W. and Janet R. Bijou Grant. Dr. Kim is interested in understanding decision-making and developing effective procedures to enhance learning for individuals with and without developmental disabilities. Dr. Kim is also passionate about exploring the intersection between verbal behavior and decision-making behavior.

5:00pm-5:50pm: Applying the Matching Law to Understand and Improve the Influence of Social Reinforcement

Quantitative models of behavior allow for precise descriptions of behavior-environment functional relations and facilitate improvement in our ability to predict and influence behavior. These characteristics are evident in basic research on the matching law and may be especially beneficial in its application to problems of societal importance. This talk will explore how the matching law can quantify the influence of social reinforcement across diverse contexts of applied significance, including assessment and intervention for (a) conversational behaviors, (b) social time allocation, and (c) disruptive or challenging behaviors. Previous research, ongoing projects, and important future directions related to each area of application will be discussed. The ultimate aim of this talk is to highlight how continued application of the matching law can facilitate progress in research and clinical practice related to social reinforcement.

Presented by Sam Morris, Ph.D., BCBA-D



Sam Morris obtained his Ph.D. in Psychology with a specialization in Behavior Analysis at the University of Florida under the mentorship of Dr. Tim Vollmer. He was an Assistant Professor and the Applied Behavior Analysis Program Coordinator at Southeastern Louisiana University before beginning his current position as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Psychology at Louisiana State University in 2022. Dr. Morris' laboratory utilizes experimental manipulations of the environment to investigate causal influences on choice and inform methods of facilitating behavior change. The individualization of reinforcement procedures and relative efficacy of different types and parameters of reinforcement have proven unifying themes underlying his research to date. Dr. Morris teaches a variety of behavior-analytic courses at the undergraduate and graduate level, serves on the editorial board for the *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, and frequently serves as a reviewer for top behavior-analytic journals.