

Baer D M, Wolf M M & Risley T R. Some current dimensions of applied behavior analysis. *J. Appl. Behav. Anal.* 1:91-7, 1968.
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The emerging field of applied behavior analysis is best defined according to its seven most functional characteristics: it should be behavioral, applied, analytic, technological, conceptually systematic, effective, and generalizable. This analysis of the new field reveals its origin in the laboratory-based experimental analysis of behavior, and emphasizes the special characteristics that make it research into application rather than non-analytic application. [The *Science Citation Index*[®] (SCI[®]) and the *Social Sciences Citation Index*[®] (SSCI[®]) indicate that this paper has been cited in over 535 publications since 1968.]

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"In 1966, a new doctoral training program began at the University of Kansas to see what the experimental analysis of behavior (often identified with operant conditioning) could do if applied to real-life personal and social problems ranging from idiosyncratic maladjustments to public education. The best way to do that was from a university base and as a training program, because this application had to be done in the form of research questions at every step of its progress.

"The question was not, 'Does the experimental analysis of behavior have relevance and application to these problems?' but rather, 'Can the experimental analysis of behavior be made to have relevance and applicability to these problems?' These applications would not be automatic, obvious, or simple; they would require a great deal of integrated, step-by-step research that would vary from the laboratory methods in which most of us had been socialized. It was to be research into every aspect of these applications amenable to research, and it was to ex-

emplify the logic (but not very often the laboratory technology) of the experimental analysis of behavior.

"Some current dimensions of applied behavior analysis' was written partly as an act of self-instruction in what we were just discovering, and partly to insure that a field defined as research into a certain logic of application never stopped being research; if it did, it might slide as a whole into the easy trap of nonanalytic application. In our opinion, the invalidity of then current psychological application was both manifest and painful; we meant to see if it was possible to do much better with a new logic, and if so, to begin making the indicated technology, and if not, to quit. We were not clinicians, but we were willing to produce clinicians—eventually, if the data allowed. 'Some current dimensions...' was a description of how the necessary data might be gathered, and what a field gathering that kind of data could be like.

"Significantly, it was published in the first number of the new *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, a journal that had to be created then because we could rarely convince existing journals to include our work in their current contents. The Society of the Experimental Analysis of Behavior, which existed primarily to publish the *Journal of the Experimental Analysis of Behavior*, agreed to create the new journal partly because of intellectual sympathy and partly because its established journal, while admiring our new applications of its distinctive logic, still could not abide our typically non-instrumented data.

"The article has been cited often essentially as an act of agreement—as a way of joining the field, and identifying data as a contribution to it. Writing the article was itself an experiment: to see who would agree, who would join, and what would happen. Its original title was an unthinking 'The current dimensions....' The prudence of changing 'the' to 'some' is seen in two successive presidential addresses of the Association for Behavior Analysis^{1,2} debating how much of its prescription is still good, and exactly what behavior it prescribes for behavior-analytic researchers."

1. Michael J L. Flight from behavior analysis. *Behav. Analysts* 3:1-22, 1980.

2. Baer D M. A flight of behavior analysis. *Behav. Analysts* 4:85-91, 1981.