

2004 Planning Meeting Prompts Activities

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Since Columbus, Ohio, is supposed to be the geographic center of the US population, TIBI held a general planning meeting at the AmeriHost Inn near Washington Court House, Ohio, about 35 miles from Columbus, on 10 July 2004. In keeping with members' concern to spend our resources wisely, this venue avoided the high costs typical of big cities while still being fairly centrally located. The meeting was designed to provide an opportunity for anyone friendly toward the natural science of behavior to contribute to developing ideas for activities that can help improve the prospects for behaviorology, and the prospects for humanity, and the relationship between these two. Of course, no meeting place or date can suit everyone who wants to attend, so many future meetings will have other venues and dates. (These meetings will be held with some regularity, probably annually, so readers interested in attending should contact TIBI with their suggestions about workable venues and dates. Such suggestions carry important weight in deciding about venues and dates.)

TIBI meetings are not merely for making plans. Friends of behaviorology do not always know each other, and some people interested in behaviorology would like to get to know others with the same interest better than they can through names on a list (or even through correspondence or phone conversations). Also, some would like to see who shares interest in particular areas or ideas. And all are interested in exploring important questions such as (a) how we can make our current behaviorological activities (individual, work-related, or organizational) more effective, including avoidance of organizations unnecessarily duplicating each other's work, and (b) what other endeavors behaviorologists might undertake. Such questions arise in terms not only of maintaining our discipline's ongoing presence but also in terms both of increasing the development of the independent natural science of behavior, and of increasing the rate at which this discipline can provide its contributions to a humanity in increasing need of it. As this first meeting was a purely planning meeting rather than a conference, the schedule did not feature any formal presentations. However, since one of the suggestions made at this meeting was to consider allowing such presentations, they may be included as part of the schedule at future meetings.

People came to the meeting with their ideas about actions we could take to further guarantee the future of the behaviorology discipline, its professional organizations, and its contributions. These we shared in ways that enabled us improve on them and thereby reach toward common goals. All ideas were and are welcome, and were/are considered in a friendly atmosphere of mutual respect, and mutual concern for the near, and long term, future. (To encourage participation, this meeting had no registration fee; TIBI paid for the meeting room, a scenario TIBI will continue so long as it is feasible.) Some people were unable to take part in this first meeting, so they sent in their ideas and suggestions; those who could attend appreciated this action by those who could not attend, and these contributions received substantial consideration at the meeting.

Those at the meeting found a wide variety of ideas available for consideration. Altogether, these ranged from holding some meetings in other countries and cultures to clarifying behaviorology's potential contributions to future cultural designs, such as not only the design of improved cultures and cultural practices here on Earth but also the design of cultures and cultural practices for the future extension of the human presence off-Earth, in space or on solar system bodies (e.g., the other planets or their moons) or other bodies, with Mars being a particularly likely initial focus of cultural design efforts. (Readers interested in the latter topic may wish to consult with Scott Beach at sgb123456@netscape.net for further discussion.)

As already mentioned, a well-supported idea was to let those who attend the meetings discuss a range of conceptual or experimental or philosophical or historical or technological topics by way of prepared papers in addition to discussing activity planning topics. That is, we might arrange these TIBI meetings as dual-function meetings. The planning function should continue, but the meetings should also become an annual series of conferences on "behaviorological foundations for the future" or "behaviorological foundations for society." Both students of behaviorology and younger behaviorological professional could especially benefit from additional outlets for their work, and additional opportunities to respond to the work of others. Such dual-function meetings could be a successful way to encourage their work. Here are some of the other planning ideas or suggestions pertaining to possible future activities:

Several suggestions concerned efforts to reach out more to others. (a) We should try to make TIBI courses and certificates more available for line staff in applied settings. Our courses could provide them with additional training in the basics of behavior science and technology that is directly applicable in their work, and our certificates could provide them with documentation upon which their employer could base additional financial benefits.

(b) After updating the behaviorology.org web site following the printing of each issue of the *Behaviorology Today* magazine, we should announce the appearance of the new web-site material on several of the behavior science web-site discussion lists. (c) We should—and do—restate the willingness of TIBI to publish timely announcements, in the *Behaviorology Today* magazine, regarding the activities of other behaviorological organizations whenever we come into possession of such information (e.g., information pertaining to the annual convention of the International Society for Behaviorology [ISB]). (d) Whenever feasible, we should, and will, provide complimentary copies of the *Behaviorology Today* magazine to members of other behaviorological organizations (e.g., ISB) whenever we have their current addresses. And (e), we should increase efforts to inform other members of the natural science community about the availability of an independent natural science of behavior, perhaps initially by creating an informational brochure that includes some essential references and contact information.

Many other suggestions about possible future activities concerned organizational arrangements. (a) We should consider having advisory (i.e., non-voting) members, including student members, on the TIBI Board of Directors. (b) We should focus more effort on finding ways to enable graduate students, young professionals, and others to discover us when they find their circumstances compelling them toward an increasing interest in the value of an independent natural science of behavior. (c) We could allow TIBI's administrative items to appear only on the behaviorology.org web site instead of requiring them to take up pages in the *Behaviorology Today* magazine. These items would likely include the By-Laws,

the Policies and Procedures, and the descriptions of TIBI's courses and certificates. (d) We might add a simple "shop" to the behaviorology.org web site that lists books and other items that promote behaviorology, with simple methods for obtaining desired items. (e) We should schedule some planning meetings in other countries and cultures. In recognition of the recent conference at the University of Iceland honoring B.F. Skinner's 100th birthday, those present at this planning meeting favored scheduling the next meeting in Iceland. Arrangements to do this, in late June 2005, are currently underway; contact TIBI for details. (For those who cannot attend a meeting in Iceland, arrangements for an additional planning meeting, perhaps near Indianapolis, Indiana, in the middle of July, 2005, are also underway.)

If you find a project among all these suggestions which interests you, or another which you might help to make happen, then please let someone know. Some TIBI contacts are on the last page of each issue of *Behaviorology Today*.

The attendees at this planning meeting thoroughly enjoyed getting to know each other better as they pondered some interesting and complex considerations. They reviewed TIBI's history and mission, and entertained a diverse array of views and considerations regarding the short and long range goals—and some activities to help achieve these goals—of behaviorology in general and TIBI in particular.

Of course, in a report like this, capturing and conveying the fun and excitement inherent in the company and discussions at these meetings is quite difficult. However, I am sure these experiences will recur at our future meetings. I hope you can attend and share these experiences along with you ideas and contributions. ☺

