

## Editorial

The British Association for Behavioural Psychotherapy (B.A.B.P.) is a multi-disciplinary body which was founded in 1972 and next year celebrates its 10th anniversary. It currently has a membership of approximately 900, from a variety of helping professions. One of the major aims of the B. A. B. P. is to advance our methods of *analyzing* as well as changing behaviour and the Editors would like to point this out to potential contributors. We would emphasize that we are as interested in articles aimed at the *analysis* of behaviour as to its modification. Somehow changing behaviour seems more exciting and glamorous, but without careful analysis of problems, change can all too often be short-lived and situation-specific. Increasingly at research and clinical meetings one hears the claim "I carried out a functional analysis", when the presenter means that a preliminary interview was undertaken with the client.

How can laboratory-inspired functional analyses be adapted for everyday clinical use? What procedures, schedules and observational techniques have been found to be most practicable? Not only practicable, but also valid? For too long, the pages of behavioural journals were full of articles discussing the virtues of direct observation of clients in the natural environment as if it were only necessary to demonstrate high inter-rater agreement. The validity of direct observations was rarely questioned and the cost benefits were likewise ignored. Direct observation is a skilled technique which is often valuable but is also costly. Somehow, the analysis of behaviour must be seen as worthy of attention in its own right, for without good quantification of behavioural problems, most interventions will be premature.

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