

## [Column 72 Set 2] Exploring More Mysteries of Living: Everyone Can Help Solve Global Problems



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*Why these Columns?* Because human behavior causes global problems, and solving these problems requires changes in human behavior... So *everyone* benefits from knowing something about the natural science of human behavior that these columns describe. See the 72 columns of the first set, in the *Explaining Mysteries of Living* book or on **BehaviorInfo.com**, for the *basics* of this science.

The topics of the last several columns convince us of our readiness to apply, as a culture, the behaviorological technologies that we can derive from the principles and concepts of the natural science of behavior (covered in earlier columns) to the widest range of humanity's concerns. How can we make this happen?

Basically, the next step involves you and me and other readers supporting, perhaps even agitating for (Dare I say "campaigning for"?) establishing more university behaviorology programs and departments. We all require these to meet growing needs. (See the WANTED poster at the end of this column, and show it to those people who are in positions to help.)

Then, an increasing proportion of our world population can soon operate with an expanded, behaviorologically informed repertoire as a component of their general science education. This would lead to more traditional natural science in the education of behaviorologists, and to more behaviorology—and less superstition—not only in the education of the general population but also for traditional natural scientists.

Why is that important? Recall that our columns have supported an interdisciplinary approach to the engineering of solutions for global and local problems. This approach is not only valuable but necessary, because humanity is running out of time to solve these problems before their implications overwhelm us, forcing us to experience their worst effects.

To design and implement solutions effectively requires *all* the relevant natural sciences to coordinate their efforts. And these sciences include not only the traditional ones focused on energy, matter, and life forms (e.g., the sciences surrounding physics, chemistry, and biology) but also the science focused on life functions (i.e., behaviorology). Given the acknowledged, substantial behavior components of global problems and their solutions,

humanity needs all of these natural sciences working together, with reasonable familiarity with each other, if the solutions are to occur in a timely fashion.

Cultural survival puts that interdisciplinary cooperation at the forefront of efforts to solve global problems. Examples of concerns on which traditional natural scientists and behaviorologists work together, or even on which just *behaviorologically informed* traditional natural scientists work, include humanely reducing overpopulation (the necessary foundation for solving *many* global problems), establishing sustainable lifestyles, keeping the air and water clean, and preserving habitats and resources and species diversity, to name but a few.

Beyond helping solve local and global problems, behaviorology makes other contributions to the capabilities of traditional natural scientists. Once they become basically familiar with behaviorology, they become more able to remain naturalistic in dealing with subject matters at the edge of, and beyond, their particular specializations. Thus they can avoid slipping into the compromising use of common, culturally conditioned, superstitious agential accounts.

Furthermore, knowing some behaviorology helps them add supportive details to accounts within their specializations (for example, how various natural sciences each help account for phenomena that we tend to see as limited to humans, such as language, and ethics). Also, behaviorology provides the students of natural scientists with a natural–science alternative to the non–natural disciplines that most of these students study when covering subject matters related to behavior, including scientific behavior.

Even if people—especially those whom we call scientists, because they have a thoroughly conditioned repertoire in one or another natural science—have only a minimal conditioned repertoire in behaviorology, they would still be more likely to produce, or consider as viable, solutions to global problems that at least intuitively, or better, through design, take behaviorological realities into account. As a result the behavior–related components of global–problem solutions could develop as reasonable behaviorological interventions with an increased likelihood of success, thereby supporting the other physical, chemical, and biological solution components.

Humanity could thus reduce or entirely avoid the alternative of continuing to stumble along with intuitive or coincidental successes from attempting solutions that stem from *only* traditional natural sciences, or from superstitious cultural lore. This would be a major benefit even if it only meant avoiding the failure of coercive solutions (see columns 45–49 in the first set of columns regarding the fallout from coercion and aversiveness). Instead, solutions would involve designing interventions that included new or enhanced reinforcing contingencies for behaviors consistent with overall, improving environmental health.

Those contingencies should involve the long–term best interests of most people, and would help generate and stabilize the behaviors required to maintain environmental health. Indeed, as many more people gain more extensive behaviorological repertoires, and begin to apply them to global problem solutions, so much more is possible and will, I think (and we all hope) get done.

And so we approach the end of this second set of columns and our current journey together, a journey that introduced behaviorology to you out of concern for our planetary

home, a journey about this natural science of *why* human behavior happens, a natural science to help solve global problems in a timely manner. Virtually every column included some wonderful reality about human behavior that relates to solving the behavioral components of individual and local problems as well.

Of course, that may have left you wondering why I never spelled out *exactly* how to apply behaviorology to solve all those problems. Why did the columns only introduce the principles, concepts, methods, practices, extensions, implications, and interpretations of this natural science? The reasons are several; here are two of them. (a) The topic of how, thoroughly, to apply behaviorology, to cover its share of the efforts to solve global problems, requires many books. And (b) since a proper treatment of this topic extends well beyond my own expertise, and likely beyond the expertise of any single professional, it would best come from a team of authors, a team from all the basic natural sciences—including many new, fully trained behaviorologists—working to solve these problems.

Possibly you will be a member of such a team. After all, whenever contingencies have compelled behaviorologists to address particular past problems, successful interventions have followed. Problems whose solutions need broader teams of behaviorologists and other natural scientists should similarly see successes.

In any case our current global problems, with their behavior components, loom in our collective face. If contingencies compel enough of us to participate in the production and implementation of solutions, then we can together prevent humanity, and life on this planet, from running out of time.

Here near the end of 144 columns, I hope why science is lovable has become clear for you. It helps humanity in so many ways, and you can too. Thank you for allowing me to serve as your guide during this “journey through the columns.” May the future hold more wonderful journeys for all, perhaps even to the stars.

The BOOKS page on [www.behaviorology.org](http://www.behaviorology.org) provides a full description of the book that contains the first set of 72 columns, *Explaining Mysteries of Living*. This page also provides full descriptions of many other books containing greater detail about behaviorology than these columns could cover, as well as the book that contains the *second* set of 72 columns, *Science Is Lovable—Volume 2 of Explaining Mysteries of Living*, including where and how to obtain it.

Some of those book descriptions, and many other resources, also appear on the pages of [www.BehaviorInfo.com](http://www.BehaviorInfo.com). Some of these columns appeared first on this website, which may also feature columns from other natural–scientist–of–behavior authors.

*Writing these columns occurs separately from membership in The International Behaviorology Institute (TIBI, at [www.behaviorology.org](http://www.behaviorology.org) where you can always find more information and resources). The author is not speaking for TIBI, and the author and TIBI need not be in agreement. TIBI welcomes feedback, members, and donations (501.c.3). Write the author through this paper’s Editor. This is column 72 of the second set of 72. Copyright © 2020 by Stephen F. Ledoux*