

# Bios & Presentations

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## 11th Annual ETHICS in Professional Practice Conference

Friday, August 4, 2023, In-Person, Endicott College Campus, Beverly, Massachusetts or Virtually (Zoom)

### Ethics Introductions

#### Mary Jane Weiss, PhD, BCBA-D, LABA

Dean of the Institute for Applied Behavioral Science & Director, PhD Program in Applied Behavior Analysis  
Endicott College



Mary Jane Weiss, PhD, BCBA-D, LABA is the Dean of the Institute for Applied Behavioral Science and is Director of the Ph.D. Program in ABA at Endicott College, where she has been for 11 years. She also works with the research and training teams at Melmark. She has worked in the field of ABA and Autism for over 35 years. She received her Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology from Rutgers University in 1990 and she became a Board Certified Behavior Analyst in 2000. She previously worked for 16 years at the Douglass Developmental Disabilities Center at Rutgers University. Her clinical and research interests center on defining best practice ABA techniques, integrating compassionate care and cultural responsiveness into ABA service delivery, exploring ways to enhance the ethical conduct of practitioners, training staff to be optimally effective at instruction and at collaboration, and maximizing family members' expertise and adaptation. She serves on the Scientific Council of the

Organization for Autism Research, is on the board of Association for Science in Autism Treatment, is a regular contributor to the ABA Ethics Hotline, is on the editorial board of Behavior Analysis in practice, and is an advisor to the Cambridge Center for Behavioral Studies. She is a regular presenter at national and international conferences and is a frequent member of service committees for a variety of organizations.

#### Rob Holdsambeck, EdD, LCP, BCBA-D

Executive Director, Cambridge Center for Behavioral Studies™



Dr. Holdsambeck is a licensed psychologist and BCBA-D with over 40 years of clinical experience delivering services to people with developmental disabilities, including those on the autism spectrum. He was one of the first people to become certified in behavior analysis (#0007). The company he founded at one point employed over 120 clinicians serving 1000+ individuals annually in California and Hawaii. Previously he served his country as a Captain in the Air Force and his community as a tenured professor of behavior analysis and human sexuality. He was selected as the 2010 distinguished colleague by the Chicago School of Professional Psychology's Department of Applied Behavior Analysis. In 2011, he received the outstanding service award from the Cambridge Center for his work in bringing evidence-based practices to California. Dr. Holdsambeck is an author and

frequent keynote speaker at national and state conferences. His most recent publications are the highly acclaimed books, *Behavior Science: Tales of Inspiration, Discovery, and Service* (Holdsambeck and Pennypacker Eds., 2017, Volumes I -3 and Omnibus). In addition to the activities mentioned above, Dr. Holdsambeck has served for over a decade as the Executive Director of the prestigious Cambridge Center for Behavioral Studies™.



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## SPEAKERS

### Jomella Watson-Thompson, PhD

Associate Professor, Department of Applied Behavioral Science, University of Kansas



Dr. Jomella Watson-Thompson is a Professor in the Department of Applied Behavioral Science and a researcher affiliated with the Center for Community Health and Development. She is also the Director of the Center for Service Learning at the University of Kansas. Dr. Thompson leads the Youth Violence Prevention Center- Kansas City, a Center for Disease Control and Prevention National Center of Excellence in Youth Violence Prevention. Her research has focused on behavioral-community approaches to neighborhood development, substance abuse prevention, and youth and community violence prevention. She also works with community collaboratives to examine social determinants or factors, including educational attainment and access to resources and supports, that may contribute to disparities, particularly for racial and ethnic groups and underserved communities. Dr. Thompson researches and promotes community-academic partnerships through community-engaged scholarship as an approach to foster sustainable change and improvement in

communities. She has examined the effects of community-based processes and behavioral-community interventions to promote mobilization and change in communities. Dr. Thompson has received numerous funding awards and co-authored articles on community capacity-building, youth and neighborhood development, and adolescent substance abuse, and youth and community violence prevention. She serves on the Executive Council for the Association of Behavior Analysis International and has served as an Associate Editor with Behavior and Social Issues. Dr. Thompson serves as an advisor to the Cambridge Center for Behavioral Studies. She is a principal consultant with Ad Astra Community Innovations Group. She attained a Ph.D. in Behavioral Psychology, a Masters of Urban Planning from the University of Kansas, and a B.A. in Urban Studies from Jackson State University.

**9:15 - 10:15 am (Eastern)**

### **“Ethics of Collaboration: Using A Behavioral-Community Approach to Address Disparities through Collaborative Action”**

There is increased attention to addressing problems of significant societal concern to contribute to improving community health and well-being. The application of behavioral community approaches to advance community change through multisector collaboration is examined as a method of social validation. As an example, initiatives that integrate behavioral community approaches to prevent youth and community violence through multisector collaboration are presented. The importance of addressing determinants or underlying factors that may serve as setting events and contribute to disparities in access to services and cultural representation in the field are raised. Ethical considerations will be examined including the strengths, challenges, and opportunities for using a behavioral science approach to advance community applications through multidisciplinary and multisector collaboration. Strategies to facilitate change across systems through multisector collaboration to foster broader applications of our science and engagement with diverse scholars, practitioners, and communities will be examined.

Learning Objectives - At the conclusion of this presentation, participants will be able to:

- Understand the importance of multisector and cross-disciplinary collaboration to address large-scale problems of social significance.
- Understand the influence of social determinants of health and the importance of addressing disparities in communities.
- Identify examples of the application of behavioral-community approaches to address social issues through multi-sector collaboration.

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### Videsha Marya, PhD, BCBA-D

Director of Practicum and Immersion Experiences, Institute for Applied Behavioral Science, Endicott College



Videsha Marya is the Director of Practicum and Immersion Experiences and an Adjunct Professor at Endicott College. She received her doctoral degree in ABA from Endicott College under the advisement of Dr. Alice Shillingsburg. Videsha has provided behavior analytic services to children with autism since 2011. Over the course of her professional experience, Videsha has gained national and international experience in the field of behavior analysis. Within the US, she has worked in autism clinics in Oklahoma, Colorado, Houston, and Georgia. She has presented poster and oral presentations at regional and national conferences as well as co-authored several peer-reviewed papers and book chapters. She has been the recipient of numerous awards including the Endicott Academic Excellence Award and research awards through two Special Interest Groups from ABAI. Her

research interests include verbal behavior, ethics in behavior analysis, international dissemination, and evaluating effective and efficient teaching practices.

**10:30 - 11:30 am (Eastern)**

### **“Teaching an Ethical Skill-set: Practical Guidelines for Instructors and Supervisors”**

In higher education, a primary goal of graduate instruction is to produce content area experts in their chosen fields. Within behavior analysis, this is especially important, as the master's rank of the profession is eligible for independent, unsupervised professional practice, often serving vulnerable populations. For the instructor, the task of teaching ethics is an enormously important one. While all instruction presents an opportunity to model ideal professional behavior, the ethics class presents the most impactful of these opportunities. While resources are few and evidence is scant, effective instructional methods for developing this complex skill set exist and can be applied to the development of ethical conduct. In this presentation, component skills that can equip aspiring behavior analysts with the skills to arrive at the most ethical decisions and to engage in consistent ethical conduct are delineated. Effective instructional strategies and formats are also identified. The goal of this presentation is to provide supervisors and instructors with a roadmap to guide the development

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**Videsha Marya, PhD, BCBA-D** *continued*

of this critically important skill set, in ways that prepare students and supervisees for the situations they are likely to encounter as professional behavior analysts. Furthermore, a multitude of resources and specific instructional guidelines to ensure broad and deep coverage of the ethical decision-making skill set will be discussed.

Learning Objectives - At the conclusion of this presentation, participants will be able to:

- Identify essential component skills required for ethical decision-making.
- Identify core skills/competencies/outcomes that are relevant for aspiring behavior analysts.
- Identify instructional methods that are likely to lead to acquisition of core competencies and outcomes.

**Paul “Paulie” Gavoni, EdD, BCBA**

Director, Professional Crisis Management Association

Adjunct Professor, Institute for Applied Behavioral Science, Endicott College



Dr. Paul Gavoni is a behavior analyst who is passionate about applying and sharing *Organizational Behavior Management* (OBM) strategies with an international audience. He loves to inspire and help leaders establish positive and engaging environments across industries to bring out the best in those they serve using the science of human behavior.

A Wall Street Journal and USA TODAY best-selling author, he is co-host of the *Crisis in Education Podcast*, *Thoughts & Rants of a Behavior Scientist*, and is also an active Board Member of the *Opioid Awareness Foundation* and *The World Behavior Analysis Day Alliance*.

Beyond his work in education and human services, Dr. Gavoni is a former *Golden Gloves Heavyweight Champion* and highly respected striking coach in combat sports. Coach “Paulie Gloves,” as he is known to the Mixed Martial Arts community, has trained world champions and UFC veterans using technologies rooted in Applied Behavior Analysis. Coach Paulie has been featured in the books *Beast: Blood, Struggle, and Dreams at the Heart of Mixed Martial Arts* and *A Fighter’s Way*. He was also a featured fighter in FX’s highest rated reality show at the time, *The Toughman*, and most recently in the Lifetime reality series, *Leave it to Geege*.

**11:45 am - 12:45 pm (Eastern)**

**“Positional Authority Ain’t Leadership”**

Supporting the needs of consumers across contexts requires good leadership. However, leadership isn’t about position or title (e.g., CEO, Director, Supervisor, Lead BCBA, etc.); it’s about positively influencing behavior toward a common goal. And in the field of Behavior Analysis, too many leaders seem to be suffering from “Behavioral Myopia” as they appear to forget about the basic principles of behavior when attempting to improve employee performance. Thankfully, decades of research on Organizational Behavior Management (OBM) across organizations and leadership practices have given us a number of approaches proven to improve meaningful results. The purpose of this, at times humorous talk, is to dissect *ethical leadership* through a behavioral lens as means of producing socially valid outcomes in any organization.

Learning Objectives - At the conclusion of this presentation, participants will be able to:

- Describe a systems approach to behavior change.
- State at least two examples and non-examples of leading.
- List five key strategies for positively improving performance.

**Jessica Cauchi, PhD, BCBA-D, CPBA-AP**

Clinical Director, Atlas Behaviour Consultation



Jessica is a behaviour analyst that has worked with people on the autism spectrum for over 20 years. She resides in Ontario Canada and is the Clinical Director of Atlas Behaviour Consultation. Jessica received her Ph.D. in Applied Behavior Analysis from Endicott College and is a doctoral level Board Certified Behaviour Analyst, as well as a Certified Progressive Behaviour Analyst – Autism Professional. Dr. Cauchi is interested in research and clinical practise in curriculum development and effective teaching practises in sexuality skills for persons on the autism spectrum, meaningful programming, rapport and assent, and progressive ABA. She has published work in these areas, as well as presented on these topics across Canada and North America.

**1:50 - 2:50 pm (Eastern)**

**“The Ethics of Sex Education”**

Sexuality education is one of the areas of education most filled with challenge and controversy. This is exacerbated when considering providing sex education to people with autism spectrum disorder or other developmental disabilities. This talk will explore the reasons why sex education is important specifically for this population. It will cover some of the ethical challenges encountered by clinicians when teaching in this area, as well as some proposed solutions. Ethics of research in sex education will also be discussed.

Learning Objectives - At the conclusion of this presentation, participants will be able to:

- Describe common ethical challenges faced when teaching sexuality education to people with disabilities.
- Engage in decision making strategies to make the best ethical decision under a variety of conditions.
- Describe common challenges with research within sex education in terms of ethical integrity.



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### David J. Cox, PhD, MSB, BCBA-D

Principal Investigator, Behavioral Data Science Research Lab, Institute for Applied Behavioral Science



Dr. David J. Cox, Ph.D., M.S.B., BCBA-D has worked within the behavioral health industry for 17 years. He began working in behavioral health by providing and then supervising Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) programs for individuals with autism spectrum disorders. After 8 years of clinical work, Dr. Cox went back to school to earn his PhD in Behavior Analysis from the University of Florida, Post-Doctoral Training in Behavioral Pharmacology and Behavioral Economics from Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, and Post-Doctoral Training in Data Science from the Insight! Data Science program. Since 2014, Dr. Cox's research and applied work has focused on how to effectively leverage technology, quantitative modeling, and artificial intelligence to ethically optimize behavioral health outcomes and clinical decision-making. Based on his individual and collaborative work, he has published over 45 peer-reviewed articles, three books, and over 150 presentations at scientific conferences.

3:05 - 4:05 pm (Eastern)

### “Ethical Artificial Intelligence: Topics Important to Behavior Analytic Research, Education, and Practice”

Artificial intelligence (AI) is increasingly a part of our everyday lives. Though much AI work in healthcare has been outside of applied behavior analysis (ABA), researchers within ABA have begun to demonstrate many ways that AI might improve the delivery of ABA services. However, absent from the literature thus far is conversation around ethical considerations when developing, building, and deploying AI technologies for ABA service delivery settings. Further, though AI is already used in ABA, it is unknown the extent to which behavior analytic practitioners are familiar (and comfortable) with the use of AI in ABA. The purpose of this presentation is threefold. First, to provide a primer on what AI is and how it is developed into technologies that scale to the size needed to influence everyday clinical decision-making. Second, to raise questions about using AI in ABA from clinical ethical frameworks that already dominate ethics in ABA. Lastly, to raise questions about using AI in ABA from alternative ethical frameworks uncommon to ethics in ABA (e.g., AI ethics, technology ethics, data ethics). In total, we hope this presentation sparks proactive dialog around the ethical use of AI in ABA service delivery before we are required to have a reactionary conversation.

Learning Objectives - At the conclusion of this presentation, participants will be able to:

- Develop a working understanding of what artificial intelligence is and how it is developed.
- Identify how clinical ethics approaches common to the applied behavior analysis are relevant for AI in ABA.
- Identify how ethical approaches common to data ethics, AI ethics, and technology ethics are relevant for AI in ABA.

### Yulema Cruz, PhD, BCBA-D

Assistant Teaching Professor, Department of Applied Psychology, Graduate School of Applied and Professional Psychology (GSAPP), Rutgers University



Dr. Yulema Cruz received a PhD in Education with a concentration in applied behavior analysis from Nova Southeastern University. She is also a Board Certified Behavior Analyst-Doctoral with over 20 years of experience in the field. Dr. Cruz is an Assistant Teaching Professor at Rutgers University. Her academic interests include ethics and supervision in ABA. She also teaches ABA courses in Spanish. Dr. Cruz is an ABA consultant, supervisor, speaker, and author. She works in the development of supervision systems and the dissemination of ABA to other countries and languages. Dr. Cruz was elected to serve on the Florida Association for Behavior Analysis' (FABA) board for over 6 years, holding the positions of Member-At-Large, President, and co-chair of the Legislative and Public Policy Committee. She co-authored *The Supervision Handbook: A Guide to Quality Fieldwork Experience* and *The Consulting Supervisor Handbook: Helping Newly Certified BCBAs Navigate Supervision*, among other publications. Dr. Cruz has also presented over 40 talks at regional and national conferences.

As an ethics hotline consultant, Dr. Cruz provides advice in the area of ethics in supervision.

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Yulema Cruz, PhD, BCBA-D *continued*

4:15 - 5:15 pm (Eastern)

**“Ethical Visions: Navigating the Supervisory Compass”**

In the field of applied behavior analysis, effective mentoring and supervision play a pivotal role in shaping the ethical conduct and professional growth of behavior analysts. However, the complexities and nuances of ethical decision-making in the supervisory context can pose significant challenges. This talk aims to explore ethical mentoring and supervision and provide behavior analysts with practical guidance for navigating the supervisory compass. During the session, we will discuss the essential components of an ethical supervisory relationship. Furthermore, we will explore potential ethical dilemmas that supervisors may encounter and provide strategies for effectively addressing these challenges. Participants will gain insights into promoting ethical decision-making skills among supervisees and encouraging critical thinking within the boundaries of ethical conduct.

Learning Objectives - At the conclusion of this presentation, participants will be able to:

- Analyze potential ethical dilemmas in the supervisory context.
- Develop strategies for the effective resolution of ethical dilemmas.
- Gain insight into strategies for fostering ethical decision-making skills among supervisees.



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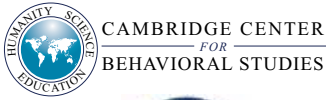
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