

BBS AND PM PLENARY SESSION (25<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2016)

# The role of leaders in the creation of cultural movements

Maria E. Malott

*ABA International*

## ABSTRACT

From 1921 to the mid-1950s, the largest muralist movement in art history since the Renaissance developed in Mexico, leaving a remarkable legacy to the country and the world. The movement was controversial from its inception. It centered on an effort to create an egalitarian society; its mission was to reach the masses with expressions of their social, emotional, and political circumstances. Mexican muralists received commissions abroad and their international success brought high demand for frescoes in government and private walls around the country. The Mexican muralist movement can be analyzed as a cultural phenomenon. How did it come to exist? What kept it going and caused it to cease? And why, in spite of international attempts, did it never reach comparable scale or significance elsewhere? I will argue the synergy of interactions from a few individuals with distinctive repertoires and interlocking metacontingencies can account for the movement. And although the specifics of the muralists undertaking were unique and nonreplicable, and constituted a cultural cusp, the properties of other cultural phenomena with substantial impact are of similar nature.

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## AUTHOR



Dr. **Maria E. Malott** is CEO of the Association for Behavior Analysis International (ABAI), which she has administered since 1993. During this time and within a few years, ABAI has risen from near-bankruptcy to become a financially stable, growing scientific and professional organization. Her past experience includes serving as vice president of manufacturing at a Midwestern injection molding company and president and founder of Malott and Associates, through which for 14 years she consulted for advertising agencies, restaurants, retail and manufacturing companies, hotels, banks, governmental organizations, and nonprofit institutions. Her clients have included Meijer, Inc.; Kellogg's; Pharmacia & Upjohn; and General Motors Corp. Throughout her career, Dr. Malott has combined the analysis of metacontingencies and behavioral contingencies in managing complex systems and, in the process, has taught

dozens of corporate executives to appreciate the power of organizational behavior management technology. Dr. Malott has presented nearly 200 papers, taught 34 workshops, and lectured in 37 universities in 18 countries, and is an affiliated faculty in three universities. She has served on four editorial boards and is the author of the book *Paradox of Organizational Change*, published in Spanish and English and co-author of *Elementary Principles of Behavior*. She is a Fellow of ABAI and was the recipient of the 2002 Outstanding Alumni Award from the Department of Psychology at Western Michigan University, the 2003 Award for International Dissemination of Behavior Analysis from the Society for the Advancement of Behavior Analysis, the 2004 Award for Outstanding Contributions to Organizational Behavior Management, from the Organizational Behavior Management Network, and the 2012 Award for Distinguished Service to Behavior Analysis from the Society for the Advancement of Behavior Analysis.