

# THE *Current*

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## **UCSB Psychologist Wins Prestigious Awards**

Brenda Major, professor of psychology at the University of California, Santa Barbara, has won three highly prestigious and competitive grants that will go toward her research and a sabbatical book project on abortion.

The largest award comes from the National Science Foundation. Major has received some \$520,000 over four years for her ongoing research on stigma and intergroup coping with threat.

Two other grants from the American Philosophical Society and the James McKeen Cattell Fund have allowed Major to work, while on sabbatical, on a book about the psychological implications of abortion. The organizations have provided at least \$40,000 from their respective sabbatical fellowship programs for the project.

This year, only 14 sabbatical grants were awarded nationally from the American Philosophical Award, while the James McKeen Cattell Fund selected just a handful of tenured professors from the country's universities to receive a grant. Major is the second UC Santa Barbara faculty member to win a Cattell fellowship.

A social psychologist, Major studies the social and psychological factors that affect how people cope with and adapt to adversity.

Her current research addresses four topics: the psychology of stigma, specifically, the psychological experiences of people who are members of socially devalued and

disadvantaged groups and targets of prejudice; self-esteem and how it is maintained; the psychology of legitimacy; and social and personal predictors of coping with abortion.

Major has published more than 75 articles in refereed journals and book chapters, including the highly respected "Handbook of Social Psychology" (1998) and the "Advances in Experimental Social Psychology" (1994).

Major holds a Ph.D. in psychology from Purdue University. She joined the UC Santa Barbara faculty in 1995.

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## **About UC Santa Barbara**

The University of California, Santa Barbara is a leading research institution that also provides a comprehensive liberal arts learning experience. Our academic community of faculty, students, and staff is characterized by a culture of interdisciplinary collaboration that is responsive to the needs of our multicultural and global society. All of this takes place within a living and learning environment like no other, as we draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.