

UC SANTA BARBARA

THE Current

March 5, 2003

Bill Schlotter

UCSB Professor To Discuss 'Generational Alienation'

Western cultures seem plagued with intergenerational communication breakdowns that lead to alienation of senior citizens. In seeking solutions to the problem, researchers have looked to Asian and Pacific Island cultures renowned for their veneration of older people.

But as Howard Giles, a professor of communication at UC Santa Barbara, will tell a UCSB Affiliates Town Forum audience Tuesday, March 18, researchers are finding that isolation of seniors is even more severe in those cultures than in the West.

"Surprisingly, not only do older people in East Asia and the Pacific Islands find young people unaccommodating, they find other older people unaccommodating, as well," said Giles. His lecture, "Talking Age and Aging Talk: Culture, Communication and Health," will be at 7:30 p.m. in the First Presbyterian Church Fellowship Hall, 21 East Constance St. Santa Barbara.

Cost is \$5 for Affiliates and Chancellor's Council members and \$8 for the general public. Advance registration is required and can be made by calling the UCSB Office of Community Relations at 893-4388.

Social acceptance is a factor in seniors' feelings of self-worth, Giles said, and therefore is a factor in their overall health. Alienation thus poses a serious health threat.

And with so many developing nations on the verge of joining the modern Western world, senior alienation is a problem expected to grow.

Giles earned a Ph.D. in social psychology at the University of Bristol in England. He later taught there and was chair of its Department of Social Psychology in 1987 and 1988. He joined the UCSB faculty in 1989 as a professor of communication and an adjunct professor of psychology and linguistics.

He was Department of Communication chair from 1991 to 1998.

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.