

## Psychology students lead way at Undergraduate Research Colloquium

Psychology undergraduates talking about their research brought in the crowds at the 2009 Undergraduate Research Colloquium held in Corwin Pavilion May 14th. Of the approximately 200 College of Letters and Science students presenting findings, 53 were psychology and bio-psychology majors, underlining once again the department's success in getting students involved in hands-on science.

"This provided me with an invaluable opportunity to present and talk about my work" said Todd Avellar, a junior working with faculty both in the Department of Psychology and the Department of Counseling, Clinical, & School Psychology. "I plan to earn a doctorate in counseling psychology, and know the significance of having research experience as an undergraduate."

Research findings displayed by psychology students ranged from brain imaging studies of people thinking about true and false statements to the feasibility of training people to pay attention to positive feedback to improve relationships.

The Undergraduate Research Colloquium is sponsored by the College of Letters and Science and the Undergraduate Research and Creative Activities Office to provide talented undergraduates involved in cutting edge research a venue for presenting their results.



Jason Luu, a senior working with Heejung Kim, discusses his work on culture and aesthetics. For more photos, see p. 10.

## Department says farewell to Lorna Cunningham



Lorna Cunningham, with her "Unsung Heroine" award, with nominator Nancy Collins.

When Lorna Cunningham retires from UCSB in July, 2009, she will have served the campus for 28 years, 18 of them in Psychology. And nowhere will the loss be felt more sharply than among the hundreds of past and present Psychology department graduate students, who have had the benefit of Lorna's expertise, interest, and advice as they navigate the graduate program.

Wendy Quinton, a 2003 graduate of the program who now teaches at SUNY Buffalo, remembers being greeted by name when she first visited the graduate advisor's office. "I thought I had walked into some alternate graduate school universe where everyone was nice and all the students were special," she recalls. "It turns out, I was right. Whenever you walked into Lorna and Cindy's office, you were in that wonderful universe. Lorna was a gift in my graduate experience, and the experience of so many other grad students. We all say that we cannot imagine going through the graduate process without the help, support, and comic relief that Lorna

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## Gerald Jacobs wins 2009 Verriest Medal



*Gerry Jacobs*

The International Colour Vision Society will bestow the 2009 Verriest Medal on UCSB Psychology Research Professor Gerald Jacobs at the 20th Symposium of the Society to take place at the University of Minho, Braga, Portugal in July. This award was established in 1991 in memory of the founding member of the Society, Dr. Guy Verriest, and honors outstanding contributions in the field of color vision.

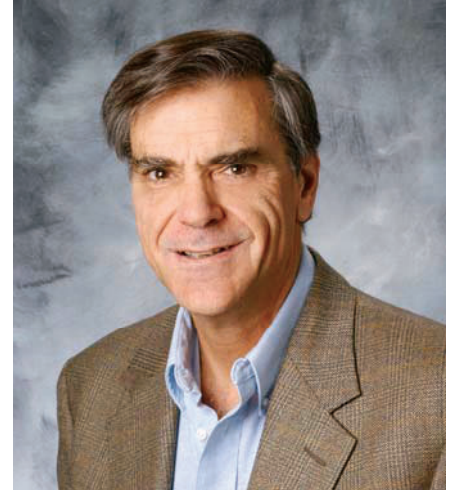
In announcing the award, the society cited the depth and significance of Jacob's contributions to the field. Over the last 45 years, Jacobs has authored more than 200 papers related to color vision. His discoveries have provided a basis for understanding the underpinnings of human color vision within the larger context of the evolution of the mammalian visual system. A member of UCSB's Neuroscience Research Institute as well as the Department of Psychology, Jacobs has pursued an interdisciplinary approach to characterizing the nature and distribution of the cone photopigments within and across mammalian species and to understanding how variations in photoreceptor complement relate to differences in color vision capacity.

Widely recognized as a leader among his generation of vision scientists, Jacobs has also won the Rank Prize in Optoelectronics (1986) and the Proctor Medal of the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology (1998). He is an elected fellow of both the Optical Society of America and of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

## European Association Jean Paul Codol Award Prize to David Hamilton

David Hamilton, professor of social psychology at UCSB, has become the first United States scholar to receive the Jean-Paul Codol Award from the European Association of Experimental Social Psychology. The award, named after a French social psychologist who helped found the European Association, is given once every three years to individuals who have significantly advanced the standing and prominence of social psychology in Europe by means of their service to the field. Hamilton received the award at a special ceremony at the association's general meeting in Opatia, Croatia, in June 2008.

Hamilton has had a long record of involvement as social psychology developed over the last three decades in the European Association's membership countries. In an attempt to encourage closer professional ties between European social psychologists and their North American counterparts, Hamilton has hosted students, post-doctoral scholars, and faculty from Germany, the Netherlands, Hungary, Italy, and Belgium for various periods of residency at UCSB since 1976. He has been instrumental in the development of the experimental social Ph.D. program at both the University of Lisbon and the ICTE (Higher Institute of Business, Organizational, and Industrial Psychology) in Lisbon, Portugal. In recognition of these contributions, Hamilton was awarded Honorary Degrees from both the University of Lisbon, Portugal, and Eotvos Lorand University, in Budapest, Hungary.



*David Hamilton*



*Greg Ashby*

## Greg Ashby takes helm of Psychology Department

F. Gregory Ashby, a professor in the Cognitive, Perception, and Cognitive Neuroscience graduate training area, has been appointed Chair of the department starting July 1, 2009.

Ashby's research focuses on the allocation and interaction of perceptual and executive attention during categorization, and on the development of neurobiologically plausible mathematical models of such processes.

Ashby is past president of the Society for Mathematical Psychology and a fellow of both the Society for Experimental Psychology and the Association for Psychological Science. He received his Ph.D. in Cognitive/Mathematical Psychology from Purdue University and completed postdoctoral training in the lab of William Estes at Harvard University before joining the UCSB faculty in 1986.



## Alumni Spotlight: Michael K. Abraham, 1959

"Be the leaf on the lake, blown by the wind." That's the advice that Michael K. Abraham, a 1959 graduate of the UCSB psychology department, would give today's undergraduates. "Some people know what they want to be, a doctor, a lawyer, and that's all right, when they're 30 that's what they'll be, part of the system. But if you don't know what you want, then you're open to opportunities and events, you're ready to be entrepreneurs of ideas, you'll be the ones who change the system."

That philosophy certainly seems to have paid off for Abraham, who's convinced that events that seemed frustrating at the time changed his life for the better. A member of the Reserve Officers Training Corps while an undergraduate, Abraham credits bungled decision making by the army for deflecting his best-laid plans to be first a doctor, then a psychology graduate student, and then a lawyer. He ended up working for IBM – "I wanted a business card like all my friends" – which gave him the idea that launched MicRon Tapes, a company that captured the then-thriving magnetic tape market by buying tapes in bulk and slashing the selling price.

Partly to make it up to his mother – "She couldn't believe I left IBM" – Abraham did a three-year stint at an investment banking firm but was moved again by a friend's plea to help raise real estate capital for a construction company in Hawaii. The success of that venture allowed Abraham to retire for the first time in 1975. But it also convinced him that ideas, and the opportunities to execute them, are what really make things happen. So it wasn't long before a new idea, this time about how to loan money to real estate developers without going bankrupt, brought him out of retirement to create first Affiliated Planners and then MKA Capital Group Advisors Inc. Abraham recently retired – again –

as CEO of MKA Inc. but keeps a hand on the helm as Chairman of the Board.

The success of his ideas has allowed Abraham and his wife Sara to become entrepreneurs of philanthropy as well. "There's nothing more satisfying at this stage of my life than getting behind a good idea and making it happen," says Abraham. To honor his mother and father, neither of whom attended college, the Abrahams provided \$6.5 million to the University of La Verne to fund the Abraham Campus Center, which includes a café, recreational facilities, and a student lounge. The Abraham's foundation has also helped build UCSB's Events Center and the USC School of Dentistry, and currently underwrites UCSB's College of Engineering Technology Management Program.

Education is the Abrahams' passion. "We decided not to donate to cures or problems. We decided to make education possible for the people who would go on to find the cures and solve the problems."

Abraham has fond memories of the 1500-student strong UCSB campus of 1956, where Santa Rosa dorm and the Chemistry building were the only permanent structures. He credits Bill Altus and Alma Beaver with getting him fired up about going to graduate school, and recalls the hiring of a very young Chuck McClintock. Abraham looks back on his time as psychology major and even more his many years in ROTC to be a crash course in how to associate with people of different backgrounds. He applauds the greater diversity on campuses these days and regrets that while growing up he didn't appreciate his Lebanese heritage enough: "I was too busy trying to be a regular American kid."

He also thinks he knows how UCSB was balancing the budget back then: "The dining commons food was just atrocious. We were sure they were cooking up seagull, and the only thing it was good for was missiles. We had great food fights." Perhaps in self defense, Abraham signed on for two years to cook Monday through Friday for the Pi Phi sorority. No seagull was served.

Although he talks gently about the legacy he hopes to leave, don't be fooled into thinking that Abraham is slowing down. An avid sailor, Abraham is planning to "double-hand" a sailboat from Los Angeles to Honolulu with college roommate Phil Rowe to celebrate their seventy-fourth birthdays. They've done it twice before, at 64 and again at 70, so why not one more time? And the ideas still bubble up, and events can still move him like that leaf down the stream. "Remember," says Abraham, "You never know how the cards will be dealt. There's still more to come!"



*Michael Abraham*



*Mike Abraham and long-time friend Phil Rowe celebrate after completing the 2007 Transpacific Yacht Race.*

## Transition: Jack Loomis becomes Research Professor

On July 1, 2009, Psychology professor Jack Loomis will add a new achievement to his already impressive list of scholarly accomplishments: Research Professor. After 35 years in the classroom and at the bench, Loomis will officially retire from UCSB, but will take on the new title of Research Professor to continue his on-going funded research in perception and cognition. Lucky for the discipline.

"No one's contributions have spanned as many distinct areas of perception and cognition as have Jack's," says colleague Mary Hegarty. "Space perception, tactile perception, audition, visual control of action, phenomenology of perception, color vision, spatial cognition, Jack has made significant contributions on all these fronts." Loomis is the author of more than 140 publications on these topics and has been the principal investigator on more than 15 federally funded grants during his career.

Just as significant, and certainly as important to Loomis, is the impact his work has had outside the lab. During the 1990s, Loomis worked with then UCSB-colleagues Reg Golledge and Roberta Klatzky to invent and test a GPS-based navigation system for the blind that is currently used around the world. In the last decade, Loomis and former graduate student Andy Beall developed virtual reality technology for use in basic research in psychology. Beall went on to create one of the premier virtual reality companies, WorldViz, based in Santa Barbara.

Loomis sees the diversity of his interests as springing from a single fascinating fact that keeps him just as eager to get into the lab today as it did 35 years ago. "We don't experience the physical world itself, but rather the end product of a long causal chain of processes, from the senses to the brain," says Loomis. "Not only that, but that end product is so amazingly elaborate and functional that most people live out their lives never realizing that they have only indirect contact with the world."

Not that Loomis isn't looking forward to some extra time in retirement to pursue other interests. He intends to devote more energy to his longtime interest in Asian philosophy, meditation, and yoga. He also plans to re-ignite his passion for aviation and flying by hanging out at the airport more. Best of all, he and his wife Doris, also retiring this year from the UC Education Abroad Program, plan to spend more time together going to museums, traveling abroad, and visiting their daughter and grandchildren in Mexico.

Loomis received a BA in Psychology from Johns Hopkins University in 1967 and a Ph. D. in Experimental Psychology from the University of Michigan in 1971. After a 3-year post doctoral position at the Smith-Kettlewell Institute in San Francisco, he joined the UCSB Department of Psychology faculty in 1974. The department celebrated Loomis' many accomplishments with the presentation of a commemorative plaque at a party to be held June 18th.



*Jack Loomis*

## Department says farewell to Lorna Cunningham, cont'd

gave us every step of the way."

Cunningham appreciates the importance of comic relief. As Student Affairs Manager Cunningham oversaw scheduling, appointments, and funding in both the undergraduate and graduate areas, and the multi-tasking demanded superb management and organizational skills (Cunningham received a Staff Citation of Excellence in 2004). Genuine interest in and concern for each of the student's different circumstances went a long way to knowing when to pamper and when to push. But sometimes only humor helped: students remember feeling much better when they saw Cunningham's "Bang Head Here" anti-stress kit next to her computer.

The unparalleled impact she has had on the lives of generations of psychology graduate students was the reason Cunningham recently won an "Unsung Heroine" award from UCSB's Professional Women's Association. In nominating Cunningham for the award Psychology professor Nancy Collins noted that "graduate students seek her advice on every aspect of their training with complete trust in her knowledge, wisdom, and genuine concern for their welfare. Her office is filled with wedding announcements, birth announcements, and cards from former students who keep in touch with Lorna for years after they graduate. She is truly the heart and soul of our graduate training program."

And it's the graduate students whom Cunningham will miss most of all.

"I've been fortunate to work with so many fine people, people who just happen to be getting their graduate degree," says Cunningham. "I've come to see that the academic achievement is just a small part of what is accomplished. It's really a life process" *cont'd p.10*



*Cunningham, center front row, surrounded by current members of the Psychology department staff.*



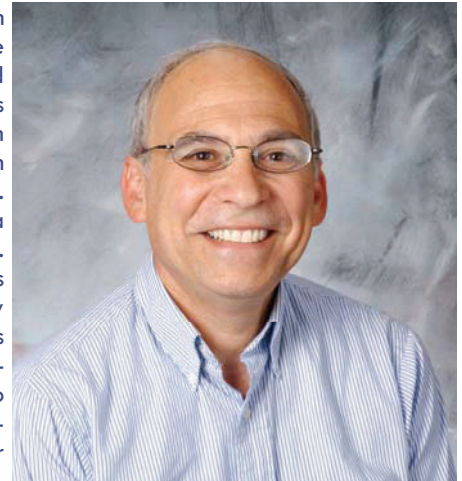
## Making a Difference: Using how the mind learns to make learning more effective

Want to make sure that you are not the presenter who drones through indecipherable PowerPoint slides while eyes glaze and minds close around the seminar table? Better take some advice from UCSB Psychology professor Rich Mayer, whose research on how people learn, particularly in multi-media contexts, garnered the 2000 E. L. Thorndike Award for career achievement in educational psychology, as well as a 2008 Distinguished Contribution of Applications of Psychology to Education and Training Award from the American Psychological Association.

One of Mayer's best-known contributions is his multimedia learning theory which states that optimal learning occurs when visual and verbal materials are presented simultaneously. Receiving words and pictures together make our brains process more deeply, as we work to make sense of the connections between the two. So a diagram or animation of a car's braking system in tandem with a description of its parts and how they work makes us think much more actively than either one alone. When that happens, people not only understand what they are learning, but can use their knowledge to solve new problems. To Mayer's way of thinking, the goal of instruction should be to help people be able to use what they have learned in new situations.

Building on cognitive science theories, Mayer and his colleagues have conducted hundreds of experiments that have pointed to research-based principles for how to design optimal multi-media learning environments (see Table below). Some tips for the presenters: Less is more as people learn better when extraneous material is excluded rather than included. Learning

is also enhanced when words and pictures are integrated in time and space; animation is more effective when accompanied by spoken rather than written text. Conversational text is a plus over formal text. With some slides packed with lengthy descriptions and others with complicated diagrams, no wonder so many presentations induce nodding off rather than knowing nods.



*Rich Mayer*

"Presentation medium does not create learning, but the presentation method does," Mayer says.

Mayer's pursuit of how people learn effectively has seen him work on problems as diverse as how math learners solve traditional algebra word problems to how computer-savvy people learn with on-line pedagogical agents. From the time that Mayer received a Ph.D. in Psychology from the University of Michigan in 1973, and served as a Visiting Assistant Professor of Psychology at Indiana University before coming to UCSB in 1975, this diversity of approach and problem has been a hallmark of his work.

The author and co-author of more than 350 scholarly articles and books, Mayer still takes multiple approaches to using how people learn to make them learn even better. He is currently investigating the effects of incorporating technology such as personal response systems known as "clickers" into college lecture courses, determining which features of educational games promote deep learning, and figuring out how the gestures and voice of an on-screen pedagogical agent affect student learning. His work is funded by current grants from the National Science Foundation, Office of Naval Research, and Mellon Foundation.

Diverse as his research seems, the unifying goal and passion that underlies Mayer's work is to uncover and apply cognitive science theories of how people learn. He remains unimpressed by either accolades for or critiques of specific technologies. Whether they are books or computer screens, Mayer sees these as media by which information is conveyed. It is the method that makes or breaks the media. Try pointing that out to the presenter next time you're trapped in the PowerPoint presentation that never ends.



*Frame from an interactive game called Design-A-Plant, based on Mayer's research-derived principles for optimal learning.*

### Six Research-Based Principles for Optimal Learning in Multimedia Environments (Mayer, 2001)

**multimedia principle:** people learn better from words and pictures than from words alone

**coherence principle:** people learn better when extraneous material is excluded rather than included

**contiguity principle:** people learn better when related words and pictures are presented at the same time or next to each other

**modality principle:** people learn better from animation with speech than animation with written text

**signaling principle:** people learn better when material is organized with clear outlines and headings

**personalization principle:** people learn better from conversational style than formal style

## Where Are They Now? Psychology ClassNotes

### 1960s

**Stewart Proctor 1963** recently retired as Director of Mental Health and Chemical Dependency Services for Kaiser Permanente in the Diablo Service Area, Northern California. After earning a doctorate in Clinical Psychology at Indiana University in 1968, he joined the faculty at the University of Utah. He left academia to become Coordinator of Mental Health Services for the US Virgin Islands (1977 - 1980), then returned to California to work for The Permanente Medical Group, Inc. Living in Danville and married to Sherry Proctor (UCB, 1972), Dance Instructor at Las Positas College in Livermore. Two children: First Lieutenant Eliot Proctor (West Point, '07), whose 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne unit is in Iraq, and Emily Proctor, a freshman Communication major and honor student at UCSB.

**Arnold Golub 1963** completed a Ph.D. in Physiological Psychology and a 3-year post-doc at the University of Michigan's Mental Health Research Institute. A founding member of the Society for Neuroscience and one of 399 "neuroscientists" (including his wife, a Michigan Ph.D.), Arnie attended the first meeting of the Society in Washington, D.C., in 1970. He was appointed to the Eunice Kennedy Shriver Center in Waltham, MA, with appointments at Massachusetts General Hospital, Harvard Medical School, and Boston University's Department of Biochemistry. Dual career considerations brought him to CSU Sacramento and his wife to UC Davis. He has collaborated at the Center for Magnetic Resonance Research at the University of Minnesota's Medical School and had a visiting professor appointment at the Lucas Center for Imaging at Stanford's Medical School. He chaired the CSUS psychology department for four different 3-year terms spread across three decades, and spent six years as the first Director of the then newly founded CSUS Office of Research and Sponsored Projects. Presently Professor Emeritus. [agolub@csus.edu](mailto:agolub@csus.edu)

**Donald D. Wilson 1966** After 38 years as a Senior Partner in a respected Los Angeles litigation firm, Don and wife Cindy are looking forward to retirement (in a few years) at their ranch in San Luis Obispo County with their horses and dogs.

**Jud Scott 1968** attended Navy OCS and spent 3 1/2 years in submarines in the Pacific. He married Ildiko in 1971. After active duty, he attended law school, externed for the California Supreme Court, and clerked for two law firms. He practiced civil litigation in San Francisco for 5 years, became a partner in an east bay law firm, then founded his own practice in 1988. Still practices civil litigation and trial work in Pleasanton. Chaired a California State Bar Section, was President of the Alameda County Bar Association, and served as Judge Pro Tem for the Alameda County Superior Court. Currently serves in the American Bar Association House of Delegates and is a Fellow of the American Bar Foundation and the National Conference of Bar Presidents. Jud remained in the Naval Reserve, completing his service as a Rear Admiral, Deputy Commander for the Atlantic Submarine Force, and Director, Submarine Reserve, before retiring in 2001. Two wonderful children: Nate is a Lieutenant Junior Grade in the Navy jet flight training program and Lauren is a Communication major junior at UC Davis. Ildiko is a Personal Shopper for the Walnut Creek Nordstrom.

### 1970s

**Andy Arkin 1972** owns an agency called BLAH BLAH BLAH which represents companies that do animation/design/visual effects for TV commercials. [andy@blahusa.com](mailto:andy@blahusa.com)

**Keith Witt 1973** received an MA in Counseling Psych in 1975 and Ph.D.

from the Fielding Institute. He is a licensed psychologist and MFT. After cofounding the Human Relations Center and Family Education and Counseling Center, he entered private practice where he has conducted over 50,000 therapy sessions. He is a professor at the Santa Barbara Graduate Institute, has published four books (*Waking Up*, *Sessions*, *The Gift of Shame*, and *The Attuned Family*), and lectures on integral psychology, attunement, interpersonal neurobiology, developmentally focused psychotherapy, the gift of shame, and erotic polarity. His article *Developmental Engagement Field Theory* will appear this year in *The Journal of Integral Theory and Practice*. He is happily married to Becky with two grown children, Ethan and Zoe.

**Mary McGrath 1975** spent about 20 years in the ad sales business before transitioning full-time into her true passions of writing, photography, and music. As a photojournalist, she has had work appear in many publications, including *Newsweek* and *The Wall St. Journal*. Beyond writing, she also spends time performing as a jazz vocalist throughout Los Angeles. "Life is a series of challenges. Sometimes, you're thrown a curve ball. You can either swing, or get out of the way. I choose to swing." [grathy@aol.com](mailto:grathy@aol.com)

**Peter Benjamin 1976** After working for Dr. Jacobs, Peter started several outdoor chains and companies: Granite Stairway Mountaineering in 1971; Granite Wholesale in 1974; and Black Ice in 1978. In 1984 he moved to Hong Kong and then Japan where he founded Odyssey Japan, manufacturing and sourcing products for the Japanese outdoor markets. In 1988 on New Year's Eve he married Miyuki Nakamura in SB and they'll celebrate their 20th anniversary this year. In 1991 he sold Odyssey and became COO for The North Face, Inc. In 1999 he joined Deckers Outdoor first as COO and then President. Since 1993 he's also owned Pacific Resources, a brand, sales, and sourcing agency for the Japanese and Asian markets. Miyuki and Peter currently split their time between Sausalito and Tokyo, getting to SB a few times a year to see his mother and sisters.

**Andrea Berman Matis 1976** received an MA in Movement Therapy at Immaculate Heart College and a Certificate of Dance from the Laban Centre at the University of London. She has been a professional dancer, mime, teacher, and choreographer for the past 30 years. Her diagnosis of scleroderma didn't stop her from founding the Universal Scleroderma Foundation and working for the Arthritis Foundation and the Scleroderma Research Foundation. Andrea has written a book, *Serenaid*, about how her illness led to the adoption of her first child and a relationship with his birth mother. She lives with her husband and children in Oak Park, California. [andreamatis@sbcglobal.net](mailto:andreamatis@sbcglobal.net)

**Judith (Malmin) Weber 1976** earned an MBA in Marketing from UMass Amherst; has operated a market research consulting business (Weber Associates) in the Bay area for 25 years. Husband Joseph (1976, Chemistry) is a Product Line/Operations Manager in the high-tech electronic industry. They have 3 children; son Matthew graduates from UCSB Psychology this June.

**Stephen Newman 1977** doubled majored in Biology and counts himself as one of Harry Carlisle's fans. He married Sarah Jewel (UCSB 1977 Biology). He received a MD from George Washington University, and completed Family Practice Residency at UCSF/ SF General. He is practicing in Vacaville, CA and has lived in Winters, CA since 1984. He has two sons, Benjamin age 21 and Sam age 16.

**Charles DeCarli 1978** is happily married with two children finishing college and the third entering high-school. He spent 20 years on the East Coast getting his MD, completing medical training and doing research at the National Institutes of Health. He returned to California with the family in 2000. He is Professor of Neurology at UC Davis and directs the Alzheimer's Disease Center and the Imaging of Dementia and Aging Laboratory. His research interests focus on studying factors related to cognitive decline associated with aging, vascular and

Alzheimer's disease. He is the recipient of numerous research grants and awards and was recently featured in the HBO Documentary, "The Alzheimer's Project, Momentum in Science". [cdecarli@ucdavis.edu](mailto:cdecarli@ucdavis.edu).

**David A. Thomasco 1978** received an MA in Counseling Psychology from the Fielding Institute and became a licensed MFT in 1981, getting a Ph.D. in Clinical Hypnotherapy in 1990 from the American Institute of Hypnotherapy. In private practice in Santa Barbara since 1981, he currently maintains a small practice and does forensic psychology work in alcohol, drug, and other legal issues. He has 4 children, 18-26 years, and has been married to Carole for over 22 years. They own the Medicine Shoppe Uptown Pharmacy, 3 "Unique Tan" tanning salons, and the "Art Int'l" art gallery in SB. They also own Desert Breeze Properties in La Quinta CA although they are winding that down due to the economy. David still loves to ski, fish, hunt, dance, play racquet ball, and travel.

**Terri L. Needels 1978** earned an MA in Counseling Psych at the University of Pennsylvania and a Ph.D. in Counseling Psychology at Duke University. Living in Hawaii, she worked as a Psychologist for a Medical Clinic, began private practice, then served as Dean of the American School of Professional Psychology for 9 years. She is now in private practice full-time, consulting with private schools, the Family Court, and the Social Security Disability organization. Terri served as President of the Hawaii Psychological Association, chaired the Legislative Committee, co-chaired the Hawaii Licensing Board for 8 years, and was a member of APA's Ethics Committee for 2 years. She continues to surf, play beach volleyball and compete on a master's tennis team. She is married and has a 15 year-old daughter and a 30 year-old step-son.

**Tara Frammer 1979** moved to NYC and started a PhD in Clinical Psychology but decided instead to pursue a career in graphic design and is now Creative Director in her own company, Tara Frammer Design, developing identity programs, promotions, trade shows, Web sites, magazine editorials, packaging, and presentations. Clients include ConEdison Solutions, Westchester Children's Association, Laurie M. Tisch Illumination, Alliance for Cancer Gene Therapy, National Foundation for Teaching Entrepreneurship, and The Children's Aid Society. She's held senior positions at Scholastic, Reader's Digest, MacMillan-McGraw Hill Publishing, and Chase Bank and taught at The New School, School of Visual Arts, and Westchester Community College. Tara resides in Tarrytown, spends her nights Salsa dancing and weekends volunteering at Stone Barns Center for Food and Agriculture. [tara@taraframmer.com](mailto:tara@taraframmer.com)

## 1980s

**Martha Ingham \*1980** is a licensed clinical psychologist and certified school psychologist working in private practice and public schools. She received a MA in Psychology from SDSU in Stress and Coping and Ph.D. from California School of Professional Psychology (CSPP), San Diego, in 1995 with research on the predictive validity of the Rorschach Inkblot test. She completed both pre/post-doctoral training through clinical internship as an active duty navy psychologist. Martha works full time in the Poway Unified School District, part-time in private practice, and teaches as Adjunct Professor at CSPP and Alliant International University's doctoral school psychology program. She is married with three children, the oldest is currently a freshman at UCSB studying Chemistry. [drmarthaingham@gmail.com](mailto:drmarthaingham@gmail.com).

**Richard L. Harvey 1983** completed his MD at the University of Michigan in 1988 and his residency in Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation in 1992 at the Medical College of Ohio (now University of Toledo Medical School). He is fellowship trained in stroke rehabilitation and is the Medical Director of the Stroke Rehabilitation Program at the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago (RIC). RIC has been voted the number one rehabilitation hospital by US News and World Reports for 18 years in a row. His research focuses on techniques to improve motor relearning in the upper limb of stroke survivors. He has also studied the epidemiology of medical complications that impair recovery early after stroke.

**Robert J. Taormina \*1984** spent the next five years as a consultant in Tokyo before returning to academe. He has taught at the University of California, Rutgers University, and universities in Japan, New Zealand, Singapore, and Hong Kong, as well as lecturing worldwide. His research interests include organizational socialization, leadership excellence, Chinese psychology, cross-cultural (East-West) comparisons, and applied social psychology. He received a Lifetime Achievement Award for Distinguished Leadership in Education from the International Institute for Advanced Studies (in Europe), and has twice received Best Reviewer awards from the International Management Division of the Academy of Management. In 2000, he was invited to found and establish the Psychology Department at the University of Macau, where he is currently a Full Professor of Psychology.

**Mitchell Chang 1987** is Professor of Higher Education and Organizational Change at UCLA. He returned to campus on May 2009 to deliver an invited talk for a colloquium series on Asian American mental health, sponsored by UCSB's Asian American Studies department. The other speaker for that colloquium was Professor Heejung Kim. That evening, he also got the opportunity to meet and have dinner with her husband Professor David Sherman, and catch up on the happenings of UCSB's Psychology Department.

**Celeste Corlett \*1988** is an Assistant United States Attorney with the Department of Justice in the District of Arizona, Tucson Division. Currently she is in the Appellate Division, writing appeals and arguing cases before the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco. For 4 years prior to joining the Appellate Division she was in the Criminal Division mainly prosecuting major drug smuggling cases. [celeste.corlett@usdoj.gov](mailto:celeste.corlett@usdoj.gov)

**Danny Lowenthal 1989** attended Cornell Law School, became a lawyer, and is now a Los Angeles County Superior Court Judge, presiding over a criminal calendar.

**Gil Reyes 1989** went to University of Colorado at Boulder in 1991 and graduated with a Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology in 1998. He took a position as an assistant professor in the Department of Psychology at the University of South Dakota in 1999, and was awarded tenure and promotion to associate professor in 2005. That same year he accepted his present position as an associate dean at Fielding Graduate University in Santa Barbara. Publications include the *Handbook of International Disaster Psychology* (2006) and the *Encyclopedia of Psychological Trauma* (2008). As an educator, he still draws upon lessons learned at UCSB to inform his teaching, research, and thinking about psychology.

## 1990s

**Jeff Shannon 1991** is living in Connecticut with his wife and 3 sons. He was recently appointed Head of Science at Westhill High School in Stamford, CT. In addition to teaching at the high school level he has served as an Adjunct Chemistry Instructor at Sacred Heart University and is currently an Adjunct Lecturer of Education at Manhattanville College. In 2007, Jeff and his family founded Dig Deep, Inc. to inspire teens to volunteer and give back to their community. He hopes to find new ways to understand and inspire motivation in youth to contribute to their communities. [jfshannon@optonline.net](mailto:jfshannon@optonline.net).

**Tasha R. (Hein) Howe 1991** received her Ph.D. in developmental psychology at UC Riverside. Her research focused on abused children's social development. She then received an NIMH postdoctoral position in developmental psychopathology at Vanderbilt University. She is currently on sabbatical from her position as Associate Professor of Psychology at Humboldt State University, pursuing a Fulbright Fellowship on the island of Cyprus. Her Fulbright focuses on feminist and cross-cultural perspectives on family violence. She is married and has two sons. [th28@humboldt.edu](mailto:th28@humboldt.edu).



## ClassNotes continued

**Lauren Fox MacMillan 1993** earned her Ph.D. in clinical-aging psychology from USC in 2001, and is now working as a geropsychologist for the Long Beach VA Healthcare System. She lives in Pasadena with her husband, and in January 2008 gave birth to their first child, a boy.

**Jed Olson 1993** is a physician in the Department of Internal Medicine at Kaiser Permanente in Denver. After graduating he did research in the Division of Infectious Disease at San Francisco General Hospital. He credits his time in the lab of Professor Loy Lytle at UCSB with preparing him for the challenges of basic science research. He entered the MD program at Stanford in 1996, where he continued to do research locally and in Africa on malaria and other tropical diseases. He completed internal medicine residency at the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center, and lives in Denver with his wife and son.

**Alexandra McCollum 1999** is now a BC pediatrician finishing a one year clinical/ research fellowship in Pediatric Dermatology at UCSD-Rady Children's Hospital, and will soon be moving back east to practice in NY.

**Sean Sowersby 1999** After 5 years as a mortgage professional Sean has decided to pursue a career as a firefighter. In pursuit of this goal, he now works as an Emergency Medical Technician for Pacific Ambulance, attends a fire academy on the weekends for Sierra Madre Volunteer Fire Department and is taking classes towards an AS degree in Fire Technology. Sean is engaged to a fellow Gaucha, Holly Saxby 2005, whom he met on the UCSB Water Ski Team, and will be married Summer 2010!

## 2000s

**Kami Leonard 2000** graduated in May 2009 from Phillips Graduate Institute in Encino, CA with a MA in Clinical Psychology with an emphasis in Marriage and Family Therapy. Kami's Master's research project was a professional workshop entitled "Strike While the Couple is Hot: How Premarital Counseling Benefits Your Practice and Beyond" examining premarital counseling as a preventative model in addressing marital conflict. Kami will begin her clinical internship at Counseling West in Woodland Hills in July 2009 earning her hours

toward MFT licensure.

**Diana Marie Hill 2001** received her PhD in Clinical Psychology from The University of Colorado in Boulder, specializing in the treatment and prevention of eating disorders. She completed her internship at UC Davis, and will return to Colorado in September as the Clinical Director of La Luna Center, in Fort Collins, an outpatient treatment center for eating disorders. Diana has expertise in dialectical behavior therapy and mindfulness based approaches and will conduct workshops and trainings in this area for graduate students and eating disorder professionals. Diana and her fiancé, Craig Schneider, (UCSB GSE 1995) were married on the beach in Santa Barbara in 2007.

**Margaret Samotyj 2003** spent 2 years at UCLA working in the Psychology Department in health psychology with Dr. Shelley Taylor. She graduated with a MSC in Organizational Psychology from the London School of Economics in 2006, followed by a Masters in Public Policy at Georgetown University in 2008. She is currently working as a MBA Fellow with the Department of Labor in Washington, D.C., but trying to make her way back to the West Coast sooner rather than later!

**Ashley Doty 2006** received a Juris Doctorate from Boalt Hall School of Law at the University of California, Berkeley on May 16, 2009. She will sit the California Bar Exam July 28-30, 2009. She will be joining the law firm of O'Melveny & Myers in December of 2009.

## Stay in Touch with UCSB Psychology

Are you receiving *Inside Psychology* but not e-mails from the department? If you'd like to be added to the departmental alumni e-mail list send an e-mail here to subscribe: [alumni-subscribe@psych.ucsb.edu](mailto:alumni-subscribe@psych.ucsb.edu)

If you would like to contribute to ClassNotes, please submit a no-more-than 120 word update for the next volume to [InsidePsychology@psych.ucsb.edu](mailto:InsidePsychology@psych.ucsb.edu) Start with your name and year of graduation. Include your e-mail address only if you want it seen by the entire readership of *Inside Psychology*. No web-sites can be included in ClassNotes. Because space is restricted, submissions may be edited or included in later volumes. We look forward to hearing from you!

## Thanks to those who gave to the Psychology Department June 2008—June 2009

The Department of Psychology is grateful to the following donors for their philanthropic support during the 2008-2009 fiscal year. These gifts have been instrumental in providing essential resources for student fellowships, faculty research, and departmental programs and priorities. Thank you!

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## Hardest Problems Can Make the Best Teachers

By Tom Jacobs

To learn a craft, the rule of thumb is start simple and build up to the more complex components. But surprising new research suggests that, for certain types of skills, the opposite approach works better. An explanation of why begins with a question: Have you ever wondered why your teenager can perform brilliantly at video games but has a C average at school? Research reveals that mastering the two activities involves completely different learning systems in the brain.

Comprehending information imparted in a lecture or textbook requires cognitive reasoning skills, which according to some estimates don't fully mature until our mid-20s. In contrast, developing the ability to score points in video games uses a more primitive form of pattern recognition — a type of learning that evolved much earlier in our development as a species and matures more quickly in an individual brain.

It's highly unlikely your teen could explain to you why he is able to exterminate so many virtual opponents; the intuitive skill he is using is not something he (nor anyone else) can verbalize. But it's part of our mental makeup and of clear value, even in a society where logical reasoning rules.

And according to UCSB research psychologist F. Gregory Ashby, it literally can save lives.

In collaboration with Brian Spiering, a colleague at the UCSB, Ashby recently published a study *cont'd p. 10*



*A technician checking a Magnetic Resonance Imaging structural scan might best rely on information integration rather than complex rule learning.*

## Psychology Celebrates 2009 Undergraduate Award Winners

### Chairperson's Award

Erik Benjamin Bromberg

Amanda J Brown

Ranjana Anne Iyengar

Teng Ma

Tonya Marie Pan

### Distinction in the Major

Erik Benjamin Bromberg  
Katharine Claire Lemmerman  
Courtney Rose Moore

Carly Elizabeth Christensen  
Teng Ma  
Sarah Colleen Williamson

Jennifer Jacqueline Doyle  
Chelsey Rene Mahan  
Michael Lee Winchester

Mark Guevorkian  
Amelia Amy-Bell Silbert-Geiger

### Exceptional Academic Performance

Jessica Renee Berger  
Carly Elizabeth Christensen  
Chelsey Rene Mahan  
Roe Reuven Salem

Emily Anne Brent  
Eric Michael Fracisco  
Courtney Rose Moore  
Krystina Elizabeth Schmitt

Erik Benjamin Bromberg  
Kathryn Jean Hawley  
Robin J Ribnik  
Nicolas Carl Stadlberger

Corina Cohen Brown  
Spenser Michael Hughes  
Rose Katherine Rothfeder  
Lola Evelyn Pearl Stanson

### Philip Steven Rethis Memorial Award

David Vaughn Clewett

### The Morgan Award for Academic Excellence in Psychology

Erik Benjamin Bromberg  
Corina Cohen Brown

### The Morgan Award for Research Promise in Psychology

Michael Warren Bergin

### Distinguished Graduating Senior

Jessica Renee Berger

## Hardest Problems Can Make the Best Teachers, *continued*

comparing "information integration" (that's the primitive method of acquiring understanding) with "rule-based category learning" (the use of logic and reason). It describes an experiment in which a group of students sat down at computer screens and viewed images of small round discs with black and white stripes.

As the discs rapidly flashed onto their screens, the students were instructed to assign them to one of two categories, using a distinction they had to discern as the experiment proceeded. Sometimes the categories were ones they could describe verbally and figure out logically — say, one set of discs had thin bars and the other had thick bars. In such cases, the participants used conscious reasoning to make their choices (a strategy made evident by the pattern of their picks).

At other times, the discs were divided into categories that were not easily described in words and, thus, not easily discerned through logical reasoning. In these cases, the participants gradually gave up trying to consciously figure out the pattern and let their primitive learning system do the work. "If you asked them afterwards how they did it, they couldn't tell you," Ashby said. "We got responses like, 'I just went with my gut reaction.' A bunch of people told us, 'I just started humming or singing to myself, and I started getting the correct answer.' As they were distracting their conscious minds, their unconscious was solving the puzzle. The series of discs were presented to the students in one of three conditions. Some got the easiest problems first, after which they grew in difficulty; others had them presented in the reverse order, while a third group had them presented at random. "When there was a rule that could be described verbally, there was no difference (in success rate) in any of the conditions," Ashby said. "That was a little surprising, since there is literature suggesting if you start with the easiest first, there might be an advantage. We didn't find that. "When you couldn't describe the rule, there was a huge advantage for starting with the most difficult items," he added. Initially, the participants did very poorly, but within just a few minutes — when we transitioned to the medium level of difficulty — they had a clear advantage, and they maintained it throughout the whole session. We were surprised by how large the effect was."

*cont'd p.12*

## Psychology Students Shine at Undergraduate Research Colloquium



## Lorna Cunningham retires, *continued*

and it's the growth and development of each of the students that has kept me here for so long. That never gets old. Thank you all for letting me join this journey with you!"

Later this year Cunningham and her husband plan to move to Arizona to be closer to family members, and to enjoy the desert in winter and the mountains in summer. They'll miss Santa Barbara and the ocean, but not the high cost of living, the sundowners, or the multiple wildfire evacuations they experienced living in Mission Canyon Heights.

Psychology students, faculty, and staff will celebrate all that Cunningham has brought to the department with a retirement party June 16<sup>th</sup>.

Cunningham received a UCSB liberal arts degree in 1972 and then served in the Peace Corps, completed a Masters at CSU Northridge, and was a career counselor and part-time instructor at SBCC for ten years before returning to campus. At UCSB she was a campus police officer, human resources assistant, and graduate assistant in the economics department before joining the Psychology department in 1991.

It just won't seem the same without her!



*Former graduate students will recognize that real life angel in this staff Halloween celebration from 2003.*

## Would You Like to Help? *Giving Opportunities in the Department of Psychology*

Would you like to be part of the future of teaching and scholarship in the Department of Psychology at UCSB? Your gift, no matter how large or small, can help us:

- create top-notch learning programs for undergraduates
- support and reward the research endeavors of our very best undergraduates
- facilitate cutting edge research efforts that move both science and society forward
- attract and hire the most competitively recruited scientists at every stage of their careers
- support the best and brightest graduate students in their pursuit of the Ph.D. degree
- bring distinguished lecturers to the department to the benefit of both faculty and students
- outfit and equip research and scholarship spaces in the new building where faculty and students of all levels can interact

The Department of Psychology greatly appreciates any support you can offer. We can provide information on dollar amounts associated with specific gift needs in the department.

The Department gratefully accepts gifts of any variety of types of assets, including appreciated securities, cash, real property, and personal property.

Gifts to the department can be made outright, pledged over a period of years, or made through planned giving vehicles such as charitable remainder trusts, charitable lead trusts, gift annuities, bequests, or other vehicles.

Many employers also match contributions to UCSB. Please check with your employer if you are unsure.

### Graduate Student Support Fund

Who inspired you to get a psychology degree? Who made the difference between finishing and not finishing that honors thesis? When you had a problem in class, whom did you seek out? For many graduates, the answers to all these questions is "My T.A." or "The graduate student I worked with." Graduate students make crucial and compelling contributions to the teaching and research missions of the Psychology department at UCSB. In large lecture courses, they are the students' lifeline to the instructor. In lab classes, they are the ones who can crack the statistics codes, and show you the technique over and over again. And most students working in individual labs work closely with and learn much about graduate school from the lab's Graduate Student Researchers. As UC funding falls, the need for graduate student support grows ever more pressing. If you'd like to make a donation earmarked for graduate student support in thanks for all that help you might have received back then, please contact chair Greg Ashby at [ashby@psych.ucsb.edu](mailto:ashby@psych.ucsb.edu).

### From the Psychology Department Wish List

**Non-restricted Fund:** non-restricted funds for the department to use to meet its highest priority needs

**Departmental Distinguished Colloquium Speaker Fund:** funds for costs associated with bringing nationally and internationally known speakers to the department to share their research with faculty, graduate students, and undergraduates

**Charles G. McClintock Fund:** funds established to support senior graduate students in the Social Psychology program who combine high standards of scholarship with service to the program

**Harry J. Carlisle Award:** funds established for the support of outstanding graduate students in the Neuroscience and Behavior program

**Undergraduate Awards Fund:** funds to support awards given to seniors in Psychology and Bio-psychology who graduate with distinction in the major, and to enhance and enrich the undergraduate program

**Psi Chi Fund:** funds for the support of professional activities and scholarship enrichment for psychology majors elected to the national psychology honors society.

### You Choose

You can give to the department and specify how you would like your funds used, or allow us to use the funds where we need them most. You can give by check or credit card or by contacting the Department Chair Greg Ashby at 805 893 2858 or [ashby@psych.ucsb.edu](mailto:ashby@psych.ucsb.edu).



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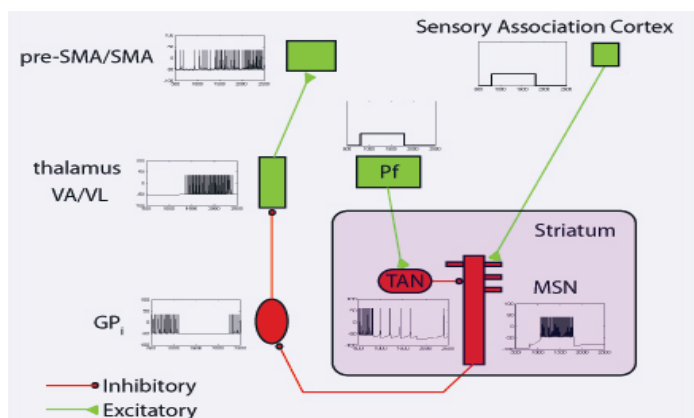
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## Hardest Problems Can Make the Best Teachers, *continued*

The results confirmed Ashby's hypothesis. "If you give people the easy problems first, they get rewarded for using simple strategies," he said. "When they get the more difficult ones, they're reluctant to give up what has been working. That actually hurts them." In contrast, the people who got the toughest problems early on quickly "gave up trying to figure it out using reason," he said. That let their primitive, intuitive learning system to kick in.

Ashby is quick to concede these results have limited implications for the classroom — which, after all, is a forum for logic-based learning. But he believes it is useful information for people in mentorship roles — those who are teaching the fine points of a specific skill that requires instinctive knowledge, such as becoming a master chef. In many professions, "there is a nonverbalizable component that is very important," Ashby noted. "An example we often use is a radiologist reading X-rays. Suppose you are looking at a mammogram and trying to find a tumor. You can go to medical school and hear lectures on the subject. "But to become an expert, you have to do a residency and work beside a true expert radiologist. That person can look at a mammogram and be very confident of whether there is a tumor there or not, but he or she would not be able to write down a set of instructions that would allow you or I to do the same." Such training needs to be one-on-one, with the novice making tentative diagnoses and getting immediate feedback (not unlike the feedback the teen gets from his video game, which instantly tells him when he has missed his target). This is the way the primitive learning system

operates; it's how a craftsman develops a feel for his craft. So, if future research confirms Ashby's conclusions and finds them to be widely applicable, it could change the way medical residents are trained — along with anyone else who is learning firsthand a skill one can't fully describe in words. Throwing apprentices into the deep end of the pool — say, by having them diagnose a tricky, borderline mammogram right off the bat — may in fact be the best way of imparting this invaluable type of knowledge.



*A neural network model of category learning along with simulated neural responses in each brain region.*