

Darcia Narvaez Receives Inaugural Expanded Reason Award

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Darcia Narvaez, a professor of psychology at the University of Notre Dame and a Fellow at the Institute for Educational Initiatives, has been selected to receive the inaugural Expanded Reason Award.

The award, presented by University Francisco de Vitoria, Spain and the Joseph Ratzinger/Benedict XVI Vatican Foundation in recognition of cutting-edge research and innovative academic programs, was bestowed on “works that question and explicitly incorporate reflections on the anthropology, epistemology, ethics, and meaning that exist within the specific science,” according to the announcement. Researchers Claudia Vanney and Juan F. Franck also received an award for their work.

Judges chose Narvaez’s book, *Neurobiology and the Development of Human Morality: Evolution, Culture and Wisdom*, out of more than 360 entries from 170 countries. The book examines early childhood through an evolutionary framework grounded within developmental systems theory, the neurobiological underpinnings of morality, and the social structures of our hunter–gatherer ancestors. “Our research in the lab examines the evolved developmental niche — the evolved nest for humans — whose primary characteristics emerged with social mammals more than 30 million years ago,” Narvaez said in a statement.

At the University of Notre Dame, Narvaez is codirector of the Self, Motivation, and Virtue Project, an interdisciplinary initiative that examines ethics, morality, and self-development. She is also a principal investigator on the Developing Virtues in the Practice of Science project, which seeks to understand how scientific methodology pertains to the abstract concept of “virtue,” particularly as it relates to scientists’ religious beliefs. Both initiatives are sponsored by the Templeton Religion Trust.