



IN MEMORIAM

Aaronette M. White
Associate Professor of Psychology
Social Sciences Associate Dean of Equity and Social Responsibility
UC Santa Cruz
1961-2012

Dr. Aaronette M. White, Associate Professor of Psychology and Social Sciences Dean of Equity and Social Responsibility, died unexpectedly in Santa Cruz of a brain aneurysm on August 13, 2012. Professor White was a passionate scholar and fierce social justice activist whose ground-breaking contributions influenced social, political, liberation, and feminist psychology, as well as women's studies and African studies. Some of her principal areas of scholarship included political violence and peacebuilding, Black feminist theory and practice, and social justice pedagogies in higher education. Her unwavering commitment, sharp intellect, openness, and wicked sense of humor made her beloved by her students and colleagues. We were fortunate to have her as a colleague in our social psychology program in the Department of Psychology for the last four years, but over the course of her career she touched many as a scholar, teacher, activist, mentor, and friend.

Born in St. Louis, Dr. White spent her childhood years in Missouri. She regularly returned to visit her parents, Aaron and Earline. She is survived by her parents, and her sisters, Lisa, Ruby, Anitra, and Angela. Starting as early as elementary school, White was known for speaking out against racism and sexism. She continued this pursuit through higher education and was awarded her bachelor's degree in psychology from the University of Missouri at Columbia in 1983. In 1984, she obtained her master's degree in clinical psychology from Washington University in St. Louis. Four years later, she earned her doctorate in social-personality psychology, also from Washington University.

Professor White was the author or editor of several notable books, including: *Ethiopian Perspectives on Feminism: Theory, Identity, and Practice* (in press, co-edited with M. Zenebe), *African Americans Doing Feminism: Putting Theory into Everyday Practice* (2010), and *Ain't I a Feminist? African American Men Speak Out on Fatherhood, Friendship, Forgiveness and Freedom* (2008). Additionally, she authored dozens of peer-reviewed journal articles and book chapters. Dr. White was also the recipient of numerous fellowships (Ford Foundation, Harvard University, Fulbright, Rockefeller Institute, Bunting Institute, and National Science Foundation, to name just a few) and held affiliations with a number of universities around the world, including Pennsylvania State University, Wilberforce University, University of Western Cape, University of Amsterdam, and University of Suriname.

Dr. White's scholarship was extraordinary for many reasons. One of her primary goals was to center the voices of marginalized or silenced groups. She adopted a nuanced intersectional perspective to highlight how diverse social identities (e.g., sexual orientation) interact with race, ethnicity, culture, nationality, and gender to shape lived experience. Dr. White employed rich qualitative methods to study the meanings of individuals' intersecting identities situated within complex social networks. Often, she took a transnational perspective,

and her recent Fulbright Fellowship (2009-2010) in Ethiopia allowed her to move her scholarship even further in this direction.

Professor White was a passionately dedicated teacher, mentor, and campus citizen. At UCSC, she taught classes in peace psychology, African American psychology, oppression and liberation, and introductory psychology. She was committed to addressing issues of diversity and equity around the world and at UCSC. Because of her far-reaching impact, in July 2012, she was appointed Associate Dean of Equity and Social Responsibility in the Division of Social Sciences at UC Santa Cruz.

Dr. White was interviewed at the March 2011 Association for Women in Psychology meeting, as part of the Psychology Feminist Voices Oral History project. The interview transcript, as well as several video clips, are available at [http:// www.feministvoices.com/ aaronette- white/](http://www.feministvoices.com/aaronette-white/). These short videos give a glimpse of her intellect, vitality, activist passion, and her sustaining sense of humor. We will miss Aaronette deeply and offer our condolences to her family and many friends.

Eileen Zurbriggen
Shelly Grabe
Regina Langhout