

TRIBUTES BY THE UNIVERSITY

HONORARY DEGREES

IN THE YEAR UNDER REVIEW, THE UNIVERSITY AWARDED ELEVEN HONORARY DOCTORATES – TO PROFS DENISE ACKERMANN, JOHN DE GRUCHY, BERNARD LATEGAN, MERCY ODUYOYE AND WENTZEL VAN HUYSTEEN IN SEPTEMBER 2009; TO PROF JOHN KANNEMEYER, DR MOSIBUDI MANGENA AND DR PETER WALLENBERG IN DECEMBER 2009; AND TO DR SYDNEY BRENNER, PROF NINA GRACE JABLONSKI AND DR RHODA KADALIE IN MARCH 2010.



Jacobus Wentzel Vrede van Huyssteen, as the first James A McCord professor in Theology and Science at the Theological Seminary in Princeton (USA), and co-director of the Science for Ministry Institute at the same institution, constantly endeavours to promote dialogue between theology and science.

As systematic theologian and philosopher of science, Prof Van Huyssteen is an internationally recognised pioneer in constructive interdisciplinary dialogue between the two fields. In recognition of his stature in his subject field, he has been awarded numerous prestigious international prizes and is a member of a number of esteemed international organisations.

Stellenbosch University proudly recognises this alumnus' exceptional academic integrity and achievements.

Mercy Amba Oduyoye is widely recognised as the mother of African women's theology. She became the first black woman to become Deputy General Secretary of the World Council of Churches and has lectured in Ghana, Nigeria and the USA.

She emphasises the portrayal of humanness by both traditional African myths and the Christian religion, reiterating the dynamic tension and interaction between African traditional religions and Christianity as an important focus in her theology.

Broad international recognition has honoured her exceptional contribution to the development of African women's theology as a distinctive written theology. This honorary doctorate recognises her remarkable role as public theologian.

Bernard Christiaan Lategan, internationally renowned specialist in hermeneutics, concluded his illustrious career as the founding director of the Stellenbosch Institute for Advanced Study. His promotion of mutual understanding and cooperation between arts, humanities and social sciences and his versatility and humanitarian approach marked him as a leader of modern-day philosophy.

Coming from the so-called public of theology, he tirelessly served the publics of academia and society with distinction. It is thus in his role as a profound thinker, who united and embodied the fundamental values of humanity and culture, knowledge and science, political and community service that he was awarded an honorary doctorate in Philosophy.

Esteemed academic, researcher and author, **John Wesley de Gruchy** is one of South Africa's most influential and respected theologians and has garnered many national and international awards for his highly acclaimed publications.

Prof de Gruchy is also recognised as a leading theological voice in the church struggle against apartheid in South Africa. In addition, his attention to aesthetics is exceptional, and his book *Christianity, art, and transformation: A study in theological aesthetics (2001)* is seen as a pioneering work.

He is presently at the forefront of theological dialogue on Christian humanism, which he sees as an alternative to Christian fundamentalism and Christian secularism.

Denise Mary Ackermann's excellent academic work, research and iconic leadership in the field of feminist practical theology are widely respected. However, she is far more than an academic – her spirituality and humanitarian concern contribute greatly to the ethos of the Faculty of Theology in Stellenbosch through her spirituality courses that break down barriers and shift boundaries, building a strong spirit of ecumenicity.

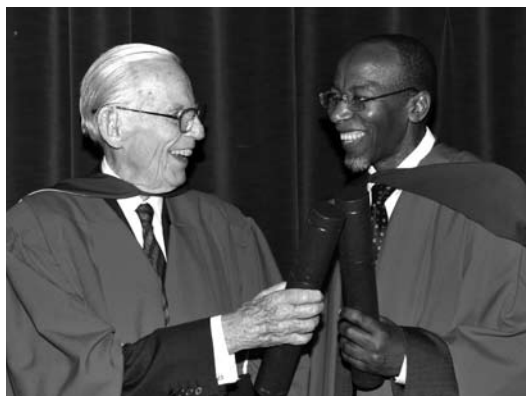
She is honoured as someone who has made a radical impression on the academic world and profoundly influenced church and public life, enriching the lives of many with new self-respect, respect for others and respect for life itself.

HONORARY DEGREES CONTINUED

John Christoffel Kannemeyer was honoured for his role as researcher, writer and expert on editing and textual studies, his promotion of Afrikaans literature and his exceptional contribution to the mapping of the Afrikaans literary terrain.

Prof Kannemeyer's role as opinion-shaper was expanded through his close ties to literary journals. Starting with the publication of *DJ Opperman 'n biografie* (1986), he took the literary biography in Afrikaans to new heights. His biographies of literary figures have earned him numerous accolades, including the NP van Wyk Louw Medal in 2003.

He is currently busy with research for the biography of JM Coetzee.



Peter Wallenberg's exceptional leadership characteristics, his achievements as a banker and industrialist, his interest in and support of education and research and his association with Africa are recognised internationally. He has close ties with South Africa and in particular with Stellenbosch University.

Dr Wallenberg, one of the leading industrialists of our time, expanded the Wallenberg group into one of Europe's largest banking and industrial enterprises within 40 years.

Education lies close to his heart. He views high-level research as being of great importance and is convinced that this University has a key role to play in the further development of the continent.

Mosibudi Aaron Mangena was recognised for his commitment to education and science, his support for research and development, and his contributions to the development of human capacity in South Africa.

In his position as Minister of Science and Technology from 2004, Dr Mangena was successful in substantially raising national expenditure on research and development. Under his leadership, the Department of Science and Technology ensured that South Africa is on the international shortlist to site the Square Kilometre Array, biggest radio telescope ever and provided support for the establishment of the National Institute for Theoretical Physics hosted at this University.



Sydney Brenner has ensured an indelible legacy with his pioneering work as a molecular biologist on, amongst others, the genetic code. For his work on unravelling the genetic code and his innovative work on the genetic regulation of organ development and on cell death he was a co-recipient of the 2002 Nobel Prize for Physiology/Medicine.

In 1996 he became founder president of the California Molecular Sciences Institute and has been a visiting fellow at the Stellenbosch Institute for Advanced Study since 2005.

Dr Brenner equals the best in the field of molecular biology.

Nina Grace Jablonski's research into skin pigmentation proves that it is an evolutionary environmental adaptation for survival and that skin colour "provides evidence only about the nature of the past environments in which people have lived" and does not indicate race. She argues for the rejection of the concept of biological race: "a cultural construct devoid of explanatory power and destructive of human and social relations".

Her research results are of particular importance to South Africa, with its history of injustice and conflict based on skin colour, and supports the objectives of tolerance and promotion of diversity upheld by Stellenbosch University.

Rhoda Kadalie is known as one of South Africa's most outspoken political commentators, a gender equality activist and a respected writer who fearlessly condemns injustice and corruption.

Largely through her activities, the UWC established a gender equality unit and her passion for equal rights later led to her appointment as one of South Africa's first human-rights commissioners. In 2003, she was appointed to the advisory board of the Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation at Harvard. Since March 1999, Kadalie has also been executive director of the highly esteemed Impumelelo Innovation Award Trust, which encourages excellence in governance and community projects.