

Faculty of Education confers Honorary doctorate on Philomena Essed

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An Honorary Doctorate degree was conferred recently on Prof Philomena Essed at the graduation ceremony of the Faculty of Education, University of Pretoria.

Philomena Essed is professor of Critical Race, Gender and Leadership studies, Antioch University, *PhD in Social Sciences* and affiliated researcher, Utrecht University (The Netherlands) *Graduate Gender Program*. Before joining the Antioch faculty in the summer of 2005 she worked as a transnational scholar affiliated to two universities in two different continents: Senior Researcher at the University of Amsterdam (1993-2005) and Visiting Professor at the University of California, Irvine (2001-2005). Trained in Social Anthropology, Women's Studies and in Race Critical Studies her research and teaching transcends national, cultural and disciplinary boundaries.

As a scholar, Prof Essed has a strong commitment to social justice. Her very first peer reviewed journal article, *Racism and Feminism* (published in 1982 in the Dutch language) was selected in 2010 as one of the most influential texts in the Dutch Feminist Movement of the second half of the 20th Century. Best known for introducing the concepts of *everyday racism* and *gendered racism*, her work has been adopted and applied in a range of countries, including the US, Canada, South Africa, Sweden, Finland, Russia, the UK, Switzerland, and Australia. She has published numerous articles in English and in Dutch, some of which have been translated into French, German, Italian, Swedish and Portuguese. Her monographs in English include *Everyday Racism* (Hunter House 1990); *Understanding Everyday Racism* (Sage 1991); and *Diversity: Gender, Color and Culture* (University of Massachusetts Press 1996). Co-edited Volumes: *Race Critical Theories* (Blackwell 2002); *Refugees and the Transformation of Societies* (Berghahn 2004); and *A Companion to Gender Studies* (Blackwell 2005, selected 'outstanding' 2005 academic reference, American Librarian Association). Volumes in progress include *Clones, Fakes and the Posthuman: Cultures of Replication* and *Dutch Racism*.

Theory and practice are mutually constitutive of Essed's career. In addition to her academic work she has been advisor to governmental and non-governmental organizations, nationally and internationally, on issues of education, race, ethnic and gender equity; leadership and organizational diversity. In the Netherlands she co-founded the *Network for College Educated Black, Migrant and Refugee Women* (mid 1980s) and the national institute *E-quality: Experts in Gender and Ethnicity* (1997/8). She has been a Member of the Dutch national *Temporary Expert Commission for Women's Emancipation* (1998-2001) and a Member of the Dutch *Selection*

Commission of Members of the Judiciary (SRM, 2003-2010). Since 2004 she is Deputy Member of the Dutch *Equal Treatment Commission*.

As an expert witness on race, gender and racism in Europe Prof Essed had the honor of addressing national and international governing bodies including The *European Parliament* (Brussels, 1984); *The United Nations Economic and Social Council* (New York, 2001); *The House of Representatives of the States-General* (The Hague, the Netherlands, 2004); and the *United States Helsinki Commission, Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe*, (Capitol Hill, Washington, 2008).

In April 2011 Philomena Essed was honored with a Knighthood from *Queen Beatrix* of the Netherlands.

The Honorary doctorate was conferred on Philomena Essed for her exemplary trans-disciplinary work in Education, Critical Race, Gender and Leadership studies.

For more photos from the event, click [here](#)

To view Prof Essed's speech, click [here](#)