

OBITUARY

In Memoriam Prof Marie Muller

The well-known political scientist, Marie Muller, passed away on 4 March this year after a five-year battle with Multiple System Atrophy (MSA), a degenerative neurological disorder. Marie had a long and distinguished career in the South African and broader international Political Sciences communities. She obtained her BA, BA Hons and MA in International Relations with distinction from the University of Pretoria (UP), and her PhD from the (then) Rand Afrikaans University. She joined the Department of Political Sciences at the University of South Africa (UNISA) during the 1970s and became one of the first female International Relations lecturers in South Africa. In fact, her career was studded with 'firsts' for a woman: in 1996 she was appointed professor and first female head of the Department of Political Sciences at UP and in 2000 as the first female dean of Humanities at the same university. She was also the first female president of what is today the South African Association of Political Studies (SAAPS) and of the internationally renowned Pugwash Council. In 2010 she received the first SAAPS lifelong achievement reward in recognition of her sterling service to the South African political studies community. During her deanship she was elected twice by members of the UP Senate as their representative on the University Council and in this position she also served as member of the Council's permanent committee.

Marie Muller will be remembered for her contributions to the development of Diplomatic Studies as a sub-discipline in South African universities. In the late 1990s she established a master's programme in Diplomatic Studies at the University of Pretoria. She also introduced International Political Economy as part of the undergraduate syllabus of UNISA in the early 1990s and later at UP. Her research focused on Diplomatic Studies, with her master's dissertation on South African foreign policy and diplomacy published in book form during the 1970s, on regional politics (the focus of her PhD thesis) and on nuclear politics and diplomacy — an interest that brought her first into contact with Pugwash. She supervised several master's students in the field of

nuclear politics and diplomacy, and in water politics. One of her most well-known publications was the book *Change and South Africa's External Relations* (1997) which she edited with Walter Carlsnaes. In 2002 she published an occasional paper, *Some observations on South Africa's economic diplomacy and the role of the Department of Foreign Affairs*, with the Institute for Global Dialogue (IGD), a rather prescient piece of work that already foreshadowed the increasingly important role of economic diplomacy in the country's foreign policy.

As Head of the Department of Political Sciences at the University of Pretoria, Maríe made a huge contribution to the internationalisation of the Department, amongst others by establishing the Centre for International Political Studies (CIPS) and as chairperson of the Institute for Strategic Studies (ISSUP). As Dean, she was subsequently involved in the early stages of having CIPS and ISSUP merge into what became, in 2011, the Institute for Strategic and Political Affairs (ISPA). Under her leadership many staff members were given opportunities to network internationally, broadening the Department's contacts and research associations with colleagues in Argentina, the USA, Europe, Russia and Africa. Dr 'Funmi Olonisakin (now heading the African Leadership Centre in Nairobi, and attached to King's College in London), was one of the young African academics who came to spend time in the Department with Maríe and her colleagues during the late 1990s and who still retains formal links with the Department and ISPA.

After being diagnosed with MSA in 2008, Maríe decided against a third term as dean and returned to the Department of Political Sciences at UP as professor and as postgraduate supervisor. She took early retirement in 2011 due to her steadily deteriorating health, but remained in regular contact with her friends and former colleagues in the Department and University and in the broader political studies community. The scores of messages received by the Department after her retirement and yet again after news of her death confirmed that Maríe had had a lasting impact on the lives of many of those whom she came into contact with, especially as mentor of young students who intended to build academic careers. Her influence on the development of these students into fully-fledged academics lives on in the professional lives of colleagues such as Anton du Plessis at UP, Annette Seegers at the University of Cape Town (UCT), Joeliën Pretorius at the University of the Western Cape (UWC), Catherine

Botha at the University of Johannesburg (UJ) and Sally Matthews at Rhodes. Marie's career spanned almost four decades and she was present and involved in some of the great changes in the political science community from the late 1980s onwards, contributing to the transformation of this community into an association reflecting the broad diversity of the South African political landscape.

Her colleagues in the Department of Political Sciences, ISPA and the UP Faculty of Humanities will remember her not only as a dynamic head of department and dean, but also as a warm and loyal friend, as a person who lived life to the full, as someone who was an excellent cook and who enjoyed swimming, horse-riding and long walks on the beach at Betty's Bay and who was a ferocious reader who loved discussing books and ideas late into the night over several glasses of red wine. She was a warm and lovely person who will be remembered for her integrity, commitment and her loyalty to friends, colleagues and students. She is survived by her husband, Andre Viljoen and her three children, Frans, Liebet and Daniel Jooste.

This issue of the *Strategic Review for Southern Africa* is dedicated to her memory.

Hamba Kahle, Marie.

Maxi Schoeman