



Hayden V. White
July 12, 1928 - March 5, 2018
Resident of Santa Cruz

It is with deep sadness that we announce the death of Hayden V. White, who passed away peacefully at dusk at his home on March 5, 2018, surrounded by his family. Hayden was a 40 year resident of Santa Cruz, although he traveled the world.

Born on July 12, 1928 in Martin, Tennessee of humble beginnings, his family worked the fields in the South, and saved money to travel North by taxi to start a new beginning, his father finding work in the car factories of Detroit, hoping to buy land of their own in Tennessee. Hayden was a traveler even then, moving between Tennessee and Detroit seven times in his first 15 years.

Enlisting in the Navy towards the end of WWII, Hayden completed flight training in Pensacola. He used his G.I. bill to begin his academic career at Wayne State University in Detroit, receiving his B.A. in History in 1951, and his M.A. degree from the University of Michigan in 1952. Spending two years in Rome, Italy on a Fulbright Fellowship, he completed his dissertation research in the Vatican library on Church Reform in the Middle Ages, and received his Ph.D. in History from the University of Michigan in 1956.

Since that time, Hayden received 8 Doctor of Humane Letters (Honoris Causa) Degrees among which: the University of Michigan, Wesleyan University, North Carolina State University, The European University of Budapest, Gdansk University, and the Free University of Berlin. As professor, he was a gifted, charismatic teacher and mentor to many worldwide. He held teaching positions at Wayne State University, the University of Rochester New York, UCLA, Wesleyan University, UC Santa Cruz, UC Berkeley, and Stanford University. Among many other awards, he was an elected Fellow to the American Philosophical Society and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. He was also awarded the prestigious title of University Professor in the UC System. Hayden ended his career as University Professor Emeritus at the History of Consciousness Department of the University of California, Santa Cruz, having previously retired from the Comparative Literature Department of Stanford University.

Although trained as a medieval historian, the majority of Hayden's work focused on Modern European Intellectual History, literary criticism, philosophy, and historiography. One of his most important essays was entitled "The Burden of History" (1966), indicating the direction of his future work, which was to re-imagine history as a creative as well as a scientific enterprise. *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century European* (1973), considered his landmark publication, initiated a major re-orientation in the field of historiography. It has been translated into more than ten languages. His last book, *The Practical Past* (2014) opened a new way of historical thinking outside the professional norms, insisting that history is a set of practical pre-suppositions accessible by rhetorical and literary means, which constitutes the ethical foundation of our daily existence.

Hayden White figured prominently in a landmark California Supreme Court case regarding covert intelligence gathering on college campuses by police officers [White vs. Davis]. During 1972, while a professor of history at UCLA and acting as sole plaintiff, He sued the L.A. Chief of Police, alleging the illegal expenditure of public funds in connection with covert intelligence gathering by police at UCLA. The covert activities included police officers registering as students, taking notes of discussions occurring in classes, and making police reports on these discussions. The Supreme Court found for White in a unanimous decision. This case set the standard that determines the limits of legal police surveillance of political activity in California.

Hayden's life was characterized by his passionate vitality and pleasure in human conversation. No topic was taboo. A man of wit and irony, he will be remembered for his human curiosity, warmth, and immense generosity. He was an excellent dancer and an accomplished chef, having received a culinary certificate from the Ritz Escoffier in Paris, France. He will be missed.

He is survived by his wife of 46 years, Margaret Brose; his children Juliana Sarah Brose White, Adam Virgil White and David H. White; and his grandson David Ross White. He was preceded in death by his father Virgil White, his mother Ruby Alda Clark White, and his sister Helen White Dowling. The family would like to thank Hospice of Santa Cruz County, his physician Dr. Grace Laurencin, and his trusted friend, trainer, and caregiver, Josh Kemp.

A memorial service will be held at Temple Beth El, 3055 Porter Gulch Rd., Aptos, CA on Friday March 9, 2018 beginning at 10:30 am. A meal of consolation will follow. For those wishing to express their condolences or share a remembrance with Hayden's family, please visit www.pacificgardenschapel.com.

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