

POST-ELECTION SUPPORT

Nov. 4 • 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

University Counseling Center will be available to individuals and groups who may need support. No appointment necessary.

Nov. 4 • 3 p.m. - 5 p.m.

Drop-in group to express feelings surrounding the election. EMU Walnut Room.

For more information, call 346-3227.

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Visiting scholar says hope faded

By Mandy Baucum
Emerald Reporter

When Ibitola Pearce, senior lecturer at Obafemi Awolowo University in Nigeria, attended college during the 1960s, leaders like Malcolm X and Martin Luther King Jr. offered hope for improvement among black communities.

Now, after spending 12 years in Africa and returning to the University as a visiting scholar, Pearce said she believes that hope may be a thing of the past.

During her time in the United States, Pearce said many people have told her U.S. race relations aren't moving as progressively as they had in the past.

"The black community was moving forward," Pearce said. "I've been told by many blacks that that is something of the past. On the surface it's very calm but one has the feeling it's not very calm."

Pearce said she has more knowledge and concern of the events taking place in her African homeland.

The International Monetary Fund and World Bank created the Structural Adjustment Program in 1986, Pearce said. SAP was supposed to help African countries get out of crisis and improve their economic situation. Thirty six of the 42 countries in Africa must follow codes of SAP.

In the early 1990s, people began assessing the success of the program.

"The general consensus is that it has been devastating," Pearce said. "No country has bounced back."

Over the years, SAP has devalued currency, demanded crops be exported and spent less money on welfare, education and health, Pearce said.

In 1985, one naira, the monetary unit of Nigeria, was equal to 1.12 American dollars. This year, the monetary power of the naira has decreased to 23 naira to \$1 American. Pearce said in Zambia, where SAP exists, the monetary ratio is 300 kwacha to \$1 American.

Pearce said the people under the control of SAP work harder, but they remain at an economic standstill.

Pearce said her country has had a difficult time recuperating from the devastating effects of first the slave trade, then colonialism and then SAP.

"There has been a lot of external pressure on Africa," Pearce said. "Before you get ready to stand up, something blows you back down again."

There hasn't been much internal help from Africa's "poor leadership," Pearce said.

"Every new band of leaders blames the former leaders," she said.

Pearce graduated from Mills College in Oakland, California, and earned her master's and doctorate degrees from Brown University. Pearce's stay at the University will last only until the end of fall term. From Eugene she will travel to Northwestern University in Evanston, Ill.

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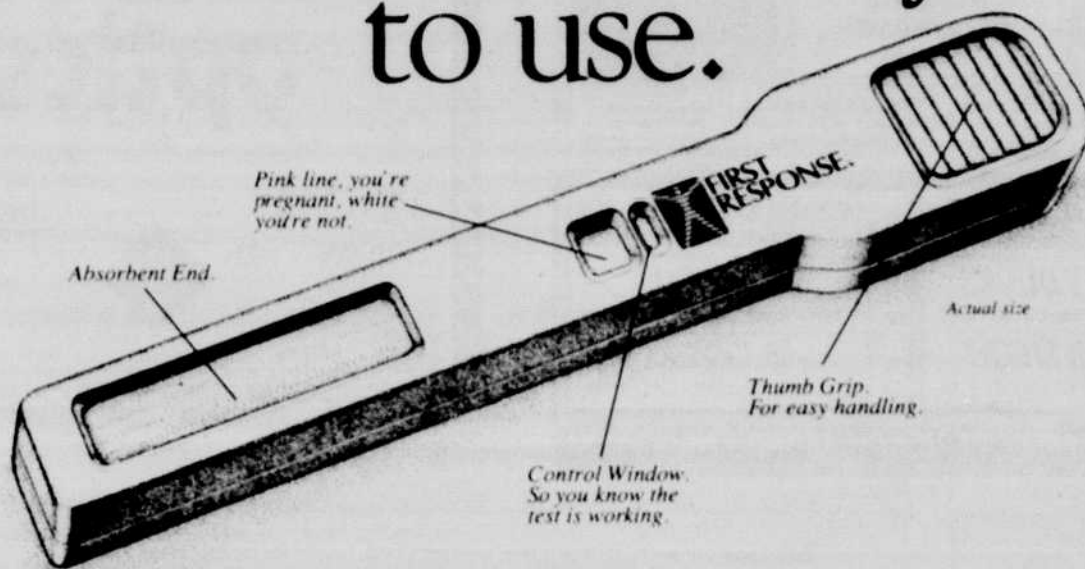
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