

# THE *Lamphere* CASE

## The Sex Discrimination Lawsuit that **Changed Brown**



**1964**

President Johnson signs the Civil Rights Act of 1964 into law. Title VII prohibits employment discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.

**1971**

Pembroke College (women) merges with The College (men) and Brown becomes a co-educational university.

**1974**

In May, the Anthropology Department declines to recommend Louise Lamphere for tenure. That fall, Lamphere files a grievance with the Faculty Policy Group.

An ad hoc faculty committee known as the “Gorton Committee” for its co-chair, Arlene Gorton, is created to adjudicate the grievance.

**1976**

Judge Raymond J. Pettine certifies Lamphere’s case as a class action. Claude Carey, Helen Cserr, and Patricia Russian join the suit as named plaintiffs.

**1977**

Howard Swearer is sworn in as Brown’s 15th President in January. In September, plaintiffs and defendants avoid trial by agreeing to a Consent Decree “designed to achieve on behalf of women full representativeness with respect to faculty at Brown.”

**1986**

Discussions begin about updating the Consent Decree’s goals and timetables for women faculty, due to expire the following year. Louise Lamphere resigns from her position at Brown and becomes a full-time faculty member at the University of New Mexico.

**1968**

Louise Lamphere becomes Brown University’s first female tenure-track faculty member in anthropology (which at this time was part of the Department of Sociology).

**1973**

Lamphere teaches a new anthropology course, “Women in Cross-Cultural Perspectives,” and participates in the Group Independent Study Project “Women in the Contemporary World,” both among the first explicitly feminist courses taught at Brown.

**1975**

In February, the Gorton Committee, focusing solely on procedural issues, finds irregularities with Lamphere’s tenure review but does not find that by themselves these procedural irregularities constitute sex discrimination. The President affirms the decision.

On May 9, Lamphere files suit in United States District Court under Title VII, accusing Brown University, President Hornig, Provost Merton Stoltz, and Anthropology Department Chairman Professor Philip Leis of discrimination on the basis of sex.

**1978**

Judge Pettine enters the Final Judgment, formally establishing the Consent Decree.

Brown grants Lamphere tenure, retroactive to 1974.

**1981**

Brown approves Women’s Studies as an undergraduate concentration. The Pembroke Center for Teaching and Research on Women is established with Joan Scott as the founding director and Elizabeth Weed as associate director.

*Continued on back*

**1987**

Brown University unilaterally proposes vacating the Consent Decree. The Lamphere class representatives and many of the faculty oppose vacation of the decree.

**1989**

Judge Pettine denies Brown University's attempt to vacate the Consent Decree.

**1992**

Brown University and class representatives jointly move to terminate the Consent Decree. Judge Francis J. Boyle grants their Petition on May 22.

**2001**

Ruth Simmons is sworn in as Brown's 18th President. She is the first female president of Brown, as well as the first black president of an Ivy League institution.

**2008**

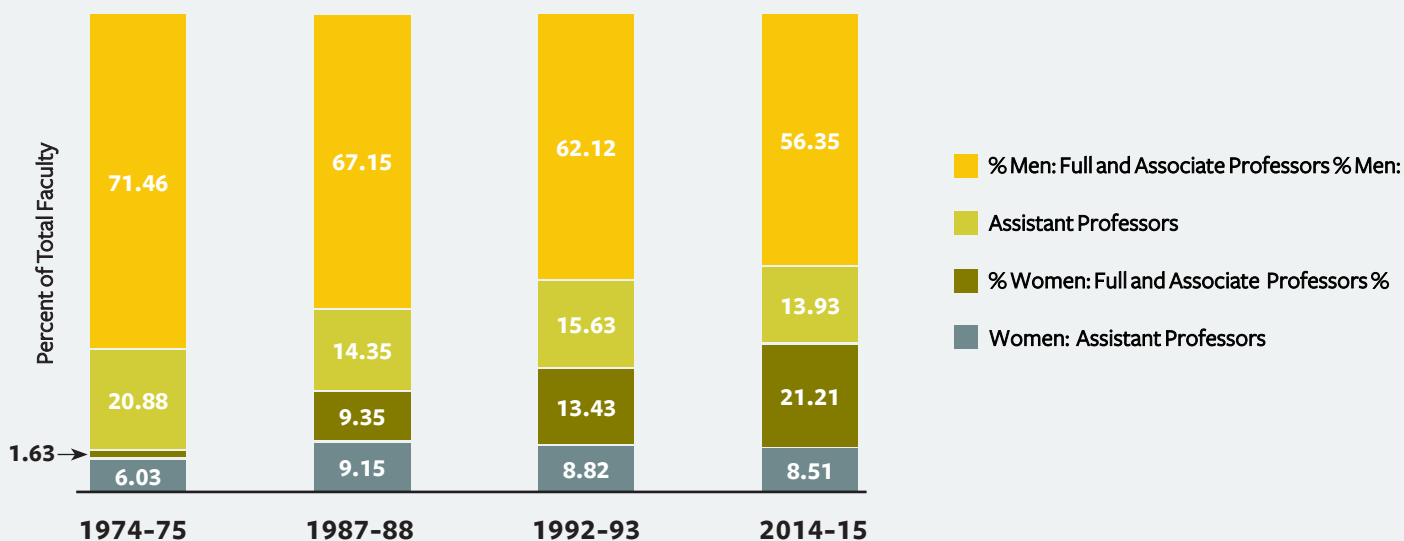
Louise Lamphere donates \$1 million to Brown for the purpose of establishing a visiting professorship in anthropology and gender studies, to be jointly administered by the Department of Anthropology and the Pembroke Center for Teaching and Research on Women.

**THE CONSENT DECREE OF 1978**

- Required academic departments to adopt and publish non-discriminatory criteria for hiring and promoting faculty and evaluating teaching, scholarship and university service
- Required search committees to make specific efforts to identify qualified female and minority candidates
- Stated that in cases where departments had equally qualified candidates, they would give preference to a female or minority male candidate over a non-minority male
- Established a goal of 57 tenured women on the Brown faculty by 1987
- Created the Affirmative Action Monitoring Committee, made up of faculty members, to monitor and implement the Consent Agreement

*More details about the exhibit produced by the Pembroke Center on the Lamphere case may be found at [brown.edu/pembrokecenter](http://brown.edu/pembrokecenter).*

**Changing Percentages of Men and Women in Brown University's Faculty over Time**



Support for exhibit and related events provided by: Pembroke Center for Teaching and Research on Women, Pembroke Center Associates, Brown University's 250th Anniversary, Office of the President, Creative Arts Council, Brown University Library, John Nicholas Brown Center for Public Humanities and Cultural Heritage.

