

Alumni Address Reproductive Health Challenges Post-Roe

The Friends of the Pembroke Center sponsored a conversation about the United States post-Roe v. Wade as part of Brown Family Weekend 2024. The event focused on Shefali Luthra's 2024 book [*Undue Burden: Life and Death Decisions in Post-Roe America*](#). Luthra, a member of the Brown class of 2014, is an award-winning health reporter at *The 19th*, an independent, nonprofit newsroom reporting on gender, politics, and policy. Her book traces the real life stories of patients confronting the current abortion landscape. Luthra was in conversation with fellow alumnus Dr. Ben Brown '08 MD'12.



▲ Shefali Luthra and Dr. Ben Brown.

Luthra has reported on national health policy for the past decade. Her coverage of abortion rights has been cited in Congressional testimony and Supreme Court briefings and in 2023 received an Online Journalism Award. Luthra's writing has appeared in *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, and *NPR*, among others. Her writing at *The 19th* has focused on reproductive health and, in particular, the fallout from the repeal of *Roe v. Wade*.

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A Refresh at Pembroke Hall

Pembroke Hall is undergoing a refurbishment, thanks to generous support from Shauna M. Stark '76, P'10. For the first time since the founding of the Pembroke Center, all our faculty and staff will be located under one roof. The refurbished Pembroke Hall will be a greatly enhanced space that reflects our current and future programming, research, and curricular needs.

One feature of the enhanced Pembroke Hall will be the renovated ground level space for the Pembroke Center Archives. This update includes a workroom nearly double the size of the current Alumnae Hall space. The new Archives workroom will have ample shelving and ergonomic, movable furniture that will allow the archivists and student workers to process large scale collections together while also being able to host classes for instructional sessions on site. Other planned enhancements include more flexible collaboration spaces on the first and second floors and significant upgrades to the third-floor event space. Additional information will be shared about these improvements as the project progresses.



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From the Director

Returning from a sabbatical year, it is a distinct pleasure to write to you with so much good news to share. As noted elsewhere in this newsletter, our most exciting update is that we've embarked upon the much-needed refresh to Pembroke Hall, with the goal of moving our entire Center under its roof by fall 2025. Pembroke Hall is an important piece of Brown history; it was the first building erected and dedicated to what was then called the Women's College in Brown, in 1897, and it was renovated in 2008 to serve as the home for the Cogut Institute for the Humanities and the Pembroke Center, though some of our staff/faculty remained in Alumnae Hall. With Cogut's move to the renovated Andrews House, we will be able to house all our faculty, staff, and fellows in one place and expand our support for researchers and students. The updates to the building would not be possible without the generous support of Shauna M. Stark '76, P'10. I am truly grateful to Shauna for her deep support of and dedication to the mission of our Center. I'll share more as this project progresses.

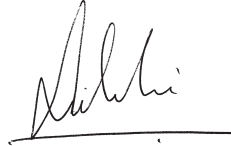
In the midst of planning and organizing this significant project, Center staff and faculty put together a full slate of academic programs for fall 2024. This year's Seminar leader, Timothy C. Forbes and Anne S. Harrison University Professor and Chair of Modern Culture and Media Macarena Gómez-Barris, has brought some fantastic scholars to the Center. Zakiyyah Iman Jackson (Duke) gave her talk "The Mark of the Wench" to a crowded hall in September, and author Emily Raboteau (City College of New York) read from her latest book, *Lessons for Survival*, a meditation on race, climate, and environmental justice, in early November.

Both Jackson and Raboteau visited the Pembroke Seminar to engage in dialogue on this year's Seminar theme, "Unwriting the Anthropocene."

September brought a new issue of *differences*, guest edited by Shoniqua Roach (Brandeis). Professor Roach was a Black Feminist Theory Project Affiliated Scholar with our Center in 2022-23. This special issue, "The Black (W)hole," features work by former Pembroke postdoctoral scholars Amber Jamilla Musser and Megan Finch. You might also notice that the journal has returned to the iconic yellow journal cover designed by Sheila Levrant de Bretteville in 1989.

Undergraduates were able to take exciting new Gender and Sexuality Studies classes this fall. "Sapphic Arts: from Poetry to TikTok," "Agnotology: The Will to Ignorance," "Queer Asias," and "Art of Survival" were all taught for the first time this semester. I'm delighted by the depth and diversity of subjects we're able to offer with the support of our postdoctoral fellows and the Louise Lamphere Visiting Assistant Professor in Anthropology, Alex Wolff (featured elsewhere in this newsletter) complementing the classes taught by our Center faculty.

Wishing you a relaxing end to 2024,



A Note from the Advisory Council Chairs

2024 has been a year of deep political and social significance nationally and globally. Approaching its end, we are proud of the ways that the Pembroke Center and the Advisory Council have engaged with some of the most complicated and urgent topics, while keeping a clear focus on our mission to promote and expand feminist scholarship.

With generous support from Advisory Council member Shauna Stark '76, P'10, this is an exciting moment for the Center and all of us. Funded by this gift, Pembroke Hall will undergo a physical transformation over the next year and we look forward to an enhanced space that will offer new opportunities for collaboration, programming, and research.

We hope you will consider renewing your gift to the Friends or becoming a Friend of the Pembroke Center for the first time. We need your support to expand the collection of essential archives focusing on women, gender, and feminist scholarship; postdoctoral research and teaching; and public programming devoted to bringing thoughtful feminist scholarship to a broader audience.

Wishing you and your loved ones a happy and healthy new year ahead.



Emily Coe-Sullivan '99
Chair, Pembroke Center
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Summer Student Researchers Assist Center Faculty



▲ Lily Randell '25, Jacqueline Zhang '27, Visiting Assistant Professor of the Practice Sarah Gamble, and Cyntia Roig '27.

Pembroke Center faculty Helis Sikk and Sarah Gamble worked with four UTRA student researchers over the summer of 2024 to further community-engaged research and develop an academic course syllabus. The UTRAs, Undergraduate Teaching and Research Awards, are granted to Brown students working with faculty on research and teaching projects during the academic year or the summer. Since the 1980s, the UTRA program has allowed undergraduate students to obtain valuable paid research and academic skills. Simultaneously, Brown faculty get much needed help developing new courses and conducting research projects.

[Read more here.](#)

Alex Wolff joins Anthropology, Gender and Sexuality Studies

The Pembroke Center and the Department of Anthropology welcome Alex Wolff as the current Louise Lamphere Visiting Assistant Professor in Anthropology and Gender and Sexuality Studies. Wolff holds a PhD in Anthropology from the University of California, Irvine. Her research explores how queer and trans folk in South Korea create life and politics in the context of contemporary economic transformations, demographic change, and shifting norms around heterosexual adulthood. This fall, Wolff taught the Gender and Sexuality Studies course “Queer Asias,” and in spring, she will teach two Anthropology courses—an undergraduate course “Gender and Politics” and a graduate seminar “Anthropology of Gender and Sexuality.”



▲ Alex Wolff, Louise Lamphere Visiting Assistant Professor in Anthropology and Gender and Sexuality Studies.



A New (Old) Cover for *differences*

Readers of *differences* may have noticed a change this year. After more than two decades, the journal has returned to its original, iconic yellow cover. The yellow cover was designed by artist [Sheila Levrant de Bretteville](#) in 1989 and has not been seen since issue 9.2 (Fall 1997). Editor Denise Davis noted that the return to the original color is “not about nostalgia,” but that the yellow “feels like our signature.”

Brown is the Mimi Pichey Assistant Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology at Brown's Warren Alpert Medical School. He is also Chief of the Section of Complex Family Planning and an attending physician in the Division of General Obstetrics and Gynecology at Women & Infants Hospital of Rhode Island. Brown is board certified in obstetrics and gynecology and in complex family planning. Additionally, he is a member of the Pembroke Center Public Health Collaborative's Reproductive Justice Collaborative, a group of researchers and advocates who meet monthly to discuss issues related to reproductive justice.

Approximately 70 people attended the Family Weekend event, many of them Brown undergraduates and their family members. Luthra's talk focused on the health, financial, and emotional impact on pregnant people forced to leave their home state for reproductive care. During Q&A, members of the audience asked Brown, who teaches at Alpert, about the next generation of medical students and how to ensure that these future providers receive appropriate training in reproductive health care. Marcia R. Ely '80, a member of the Friends of the Pembroke Center Advisory Council and co-chair of the Council's Programs Committee, introduced Luthra and Dr. Brown. Ely noted that, "We wanted to feature Shefali's work because it's so timely and relevant. The conversation she had with Dr. Ben Brown brought home the work in front of us all to improve reproductive health care access."

Reflecting upon the event, Brown said, "It was rewarding to hear how audience members engaged with the human impacts of abortion bans. It was clear that so many people in the Brown community are imagining a better world, where people can have access to the health care they need, without stigma or barriers." •



▲ Above: Shefali Luthra speaks to Dr. Ben Brown about her book.



◀ Left: Mimi Pichey '72 listens to Luthra and Brown.

2024-25 Student Fellows and Researchers

Introducing the student fellows and researchers working with the Pembroke Center this academic year.

INTERDISCIPLINARY OPPORTUNITY FELLOWS



Abigail Culpepper is a PhD candidate in French Studies and is one of two IO Fellows working as a graduate assistant editor with *differences*.



Tara Melody Holman is a PhD candidate in English and is the second IO Fellow working as a graduate assistant editor with *differences*.



Jenny Dolan is a PhD candidate in American Studies and worked as a teaching assistant in the fall 2024 course "Introduction to Gender and Sexuality Studies."

PROCTORSHIP IN ACADEMIC JOURNAL EDITING



Harper Shalloe is a PhD candidate in Modern Culture and Media and is working as a graduate assistant editor with *differences*.

CURATORIAL ASSISTANT



Italian Studies graduate student **Martina Lancia** is providing the Pembroke Center Archives with curatorial assistance for the papers of feminist theorist Leopoldina Fortunati.

ARCHIVES ASSISTANTS



Alissa Simon '25 is assisting with processing the papers of Xochitl Gonzalez '99 and Johanna Fernández '93.

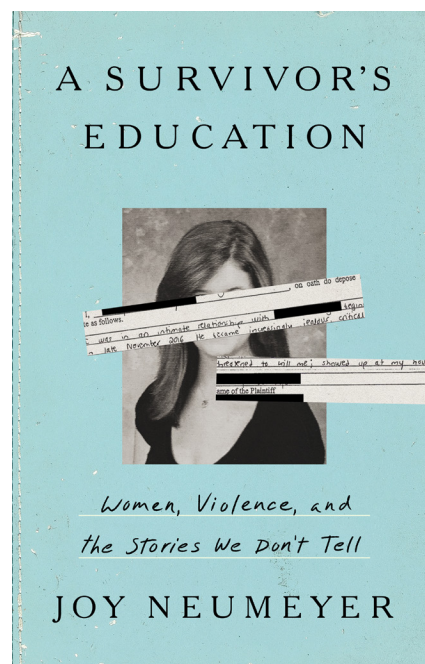


Julia Park '24 is assisting with processing the records of the Rhode Island Women's Health Collective.

Catching Up with a Past Student Research Grant Winner: Joy Neumeyer '10

On September 17, 2024, Joy Neumeyer '10 returned to Pembroke Hall to discuss and read from her book, *A Survivor's Education: Women, Violence, and the Stories We Don't Tell* (2024). The Department of History and the Pembroke Center co-sponsored this event. Neumeyer was a History and Slavic Studies concentrator. During her senior year at Brown, Neumeyer received a Helen Terry McLeod student research grant from the Pembroke Center to conduct thesis research on love, sex, and family in late Soviet Russia. She went on to receive a Fulbright Fellowship to study in Russia and earn a PhD in Russian history from the University of California, Berkeley. *A Survivor's Education* is a memoir reflecting on the abuse she suffered during her graduate work and her experiences in the Title IX process, as well as a reflection on the broader issues evident in current university systems for adjudicating abuse and violence.

[Learn more](#) about Neumeyer's book.



Spring 2025 Events at the Pembroke Center

Professor of French and Francophone Studies Thangam Ravindranathan will deliver this year's Elizabeth Munves Sherman '77, P'06 '09 Lecture in Gender and Sexuality Studies on Tuesday, February 11, 2025. She is the author of *Behold an Animal: Four Exorbitant Readings* (Northwestern UP, 2020); *Donner le change: L'impensé animal* (with Antoine Traisnel, Éditions Hermann, 2016) and *Là où je ne suis pas: récits de dévoyage* (Presses Universitaires de Vincennes, 2012). Her current book project, titled "Unearthly Literature," inquires into literature's ways of registering environmental degradation.

On Friday, March 7, 2025, *differences* will host a second "Limits of Legibility" colloquium. The Climate of Critique will feature Axelle Karera (Emory), Dixia Ramirez D'Oleo (Brown), Jean-Thomas Tremblay (York), and Claire Colebrook (Penn State). Elizabeth A. Wilson (Emory) will moderate this half-day event.

This year's Out of the Archive lecture will be given by Heather Love on Thursday, March 6, 2025 at 4:00 p.m. in Pembroke Hall 305. You can read more about Love on page 7.

On Monday, April 14, 2025, Gillian Branstetter will deliver the annual Pembroke Center Publics Lecture. Branstetter is a communications strategist at the ACLU's Women's Rights Project and LGBTQ & HIV Project. Formerly of the National Women's Law Center and the National Center for Transgender Equality, she works with advocates, storytellers, reporters, and artists to fight for gender justice, including the safety and dignity of queer and transgender people. She has been featured in media outlets including CNN, MSNBC, *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, and is a writer and reporter with work in *The Atlantic*, *Newsweek*, *Out Magazine*, and *Thomson-Reuters*.

News from the Pembroke Center Archives



C. Riley Snorton spoke at the Pembroke Center's 2022 symposium on the work of Hortense Spillers.

The Pembroke Center Archives recently opened the papers of Jennifer Terry, Professor Emerita of Gender and Sexuality Studies, School of Humanities at the University of California, Irvine. Terry's research focuses on technology, state-sponsored violence and biomedicine in the context of gender and sexuality studies. Materials include syllabi, handwritten notes, research materials, draft writings, and conference presentations. You can see the [finding aid here](#).

The Archives will also open the papers of Xochitl Gonzalez this winter. Gonzalez, class of 1999, is a cultural critic, producer, screenwriter, and the author of two novels – *The New York Times* bestseller *Olga Dies Dreaming* (2022) and *Anita de Monte Laughs Last* (2024). She earned an MFA from the University of Iowa Writers' Workshop, was a finalist for the 2023 Pulitzer Prize for Commentary, and is a staff writer for *The Atlantic*. Materials include annotated drafts and scripts, research, and personal items. Finding aid available soon.

The Archives would like to thank C. Riley Snorton for making a first contribution of papers to the Black Feminist Theory Collections of the Feminist Theory Archive. Snorton is Professor of English Language and Literature at the University of Chicago. Snorton's research focuses on racial, sexual and transgender histories, and cultural productions. He is the author of *Nobody Is Supposed to Know: Black Sexuality on the Down Low* (University of Minnesota Press, 2014) and *Black on Both Sides: A Racial History of Trans Identity* (University of Minnesota Press, 2017).

This year's Out of the Archive lecture will be given by Heather Love on Thursday, March 6, 2025 at 4:00 p.m. in Pembroke Hall 305. Love has donated her materials to the [Pembroke Center's Feminist Theory Archive](#). Love is Professor of English at the University of Pennsylvania. Her research interests include gender and sexuality studies, twentieth-century literature and culture, affect studies, sociology and literature, disability studies, film and visual culture, and critical theory. Love has written on topics including comparative social stigma, compulsory happiness, transgender fiction, spinster aesthetics, and reading methods in literary studies. She is currently at work on a new project – "To Be Real" – funded by the Guggenheim Foundation, concerning the uses of the personal in queer writing.



▲ The cover of Jennifer Terry's *Attachments to War: Biomedical Logics and Violence in Twenty-First-Century America* (Duke 2017).



▲ Professor of English Heather Love (Penn).



BROWN Pembroke Center

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I'd like to make a gift to the Friends of the Pembroke Center!

Gifts to the Friends of the Pembroke Center support the research, teaching, archives and alumnae/i programs sponsored by the Pembroke Center.



Scan the QR code to be directed to Brown University's [secure web server](#).

Questions? Contact Shelley Roth at shelley_roth@brown.edu.

Visit the Pembroke Center [website](#).

View recordings of our events on the Pembroke Center YouTube [playlist](#).

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Pembroke Center for Teaching and Research on Women

differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies

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