



Advancing Knowledge, *Driving Change*

2025-26 YEAR IN REVIEW



BROWN
Pembroke Center



CONTENTS

From the Director2

Impact and Engagement3

2025-26 Highlights4

Gender and Sexuality Studies5

Research7

Pembroke Center Initiatives and Projects9

differences: a Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies11

The Pembroke Center Archives13

The Friends of the Pembroke Center16

From the Director

Academic year 2025-26 saw the Pembroke Center fully inhabiting the refurbished Pembroke Hall; welcoming iconic scholar Judith Butler to deliver the annual Pembroke Publics Lecture; saying goodbye to two beloved retiring staff members; and enthusiastically onboarding four new full-time staff. We also initiated a major new faculty-led project, the Transnational Feminisms Initiative, which will launch in earnest in fall 2026, and we started planning the first exhibit in our new archival exhibits space (also coming this fall). Our journal, *differences*, is benefiting from the unprecedented experience of having a full-time managing editor, Scott Jackshaw, to manage the journal's growing operations. We marked the opening and closing of the academic year with celebrations: in October, with the joyful reopening of Pembroke Hall and over Commencement weekend to mark the 135th anniversary of Pembroke College, the history of women at Brown, and of course the newest alumnae/i of our Gender and Sexuality Studies program.

Meanwhile, the academic study of gender and sexuality remains under attack across the United States and the globe. At the 2026 Commencement Forum organized by the Friends of the Pembroke Center, we heard directly from colleagues whose funding has been cancelled or threatened by the

current administration, jeopardizing years of research as well as the livelihoods of these vital scholars. The Pembroke Center is fortunate to have more robust support than many gender and sexuality studies programs, but the chilling effect on our shared scholarly endeavors is real.

We were heartened by the resolute message of President Paxson at the Pembroke Center's reopening celebration, quoted below, and encourage all to read, pursue, and share feminist scholarship as a key strategy for identifying paths forward and out for all of us.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Leela Gandhi'.

Warmly,
Leela Gandhi
Shauna McKee Stark '76, P'10
Director of the Pembroke Center

"At a time when the work that's being done at places like the Pembroke Center is under attack, we are doubling down. It's more important than ever that we at Brown continue to demonstrate and elevate how important this scholarship is. This renovation is a reflection of Brown's enduring commitment to inquiry that is bold and transformative. This space will be a new home for the next generation of scholars who will ask the hard questions and imagine new possibilities."

– Brown University President Christina H. Paxson,
on the occasion of the reopening of Pembroke Hall,
October 2025

Acknowledgment of Loss

It is not possible to reflect on the 2025-26 year without recognizing the impact of the December 13 shooting deaths of two Brown students and the injuring of nine others. We grieve the loss of these beloved students and the impact of this violence on our campus and extended communities.



Impact and Engagement

2025-26 By the Numbers

Gender and Sexuality
Studies concentrators
graduated

6

Times *differences*
was accessed online
in 2025

40,181

Disciplines
represented in the
graduate certificate
program

11

Total views of
Pembroke events on
YouTube

7,305

New/addenda archival
collections processed

13

Public programs
hosted

14

Views of Oral History
interviews

39,213



The newly refurbished event space at the Pembroke Hall reopening reception



2025-26 Highlights

Launching a Major New Project: the Transnational Feminisms Initiative

Shauna McKee Stark '76, P'10 Director of the Pembroke Center Leela Gandhi announced a major new Center-wide project: the Transnational Feminisms Initiative. Led by Robert Family Professor of International Studies and Professor of Anthropology and Middle East Studies Nadjé S. Al-Ali and Professor of East Asian Studies Lingzhen Wang, the Initiative is a multiyear, interdisciplinary platform designed to foster sustained critical dialogue and intellectual exchange across regions, disciplines, and institutional boundaries. While the project will officially launch in the coming academic year, the Pembroke Center Archives has already initiated a new collecting focus for related archival materials: the transnational feminist theory collecting cluster (see "Archives," p. 13).

➔ Top: Nadjé S. Al-Ali / Bottom: Lingzhen Wang

Reopening and Fully Occupying Pembroke Hall

Pembroke Center supporters and community members came together on Friday, October 17, to celebrate the reopening of the refurbished Pembroke Hall. The renovation, made possible by a generous gift from Shauna McKee Stark '76, P'10, was planned over the 2024–25 academic year and executed in summer 2025. This most recent transformation of the 128-year-old building was designed to meet the needs of the growing Center, which fully occupies the building for the first time in its 44-year history.



▲ The 2025-26 Pembroke Seminar, led by Juliet Hooker

A Timely Consideration of Monuments

Each Pembroke Seminar is planned with its faculty leader approximately two years in advance. This year's Pembroke Seminar, "The Civic Work of Monuments," in which participants considered the form and purpose of public monuments and memorials, unfolded against the backdrop of controversial actions by the U.S. federal government to dismantle and reshape the meaning of historic institutions and landmarks such as the Smithsonian Institution, the Kennedy Center, the Library of Congress, and the White House. Guest speakers brought praxis-informed perspectives to the Seminar's multidisciplinary conversations.



▲ Pembroke Center Postdoctoral Fellow María Camila Palacio Chiriví in the Pembroke Seminar

Gender and Sexuality Studies

In 2025-26, Gender and Sexuality Studies (GNSS) offered 13 undergraduate courses. In spring 2026, the program offered the graduate seminar GNSS 2000: Methods, Evidence, Critique: Gender and Sexuality Studies across the Disciplines.

Undergraduate Courses:

- Introduction to Gender and Sexuality Studies, Denise Davis
- Senior Seminar, Helis Sikk
- Art of Survival, Sarah Richter
- Designing Public Memory: Race, Gender, and the American Commemorative Landscape, Eliana Chavkin
- A Gender Perspective on Women and Enterprise, Linda Scott
- Gender, Violence, and the Art of Repair in the Americas, María Palacio
- Human Nature: Theories, Narratives, Myths, Luke Forrester
- Is It Me or Is It Meme? Blackness and Memes, Rahma Haji
- Queer Asias, Alex Wolff
- Sapphic Arts: From Poetry to Tik Tok, Helis Sikk
- Subjects of Sexuality: Bodies, Cultures, Psyches, Luke Forrester
- Trans Studies of Gender and Sexuality, Miša Stekl
- U.S. AIDS + HIV Activism in History, Theory, and Art, Helis Sikk

Undergraduate Concentration:

Six GNSS concentrators graduated:

- **J Banson**
- **Noa M. Brown**
- **Sophie R. Levine**
- **Arlyn Patino**
- **Anisa Sondhi**
- **Willow V. Stewart**

Graduate Certificate Program

In May 2026, there were 20 students enrolled in the GNSS Graduate Certificate Program from 11 wide-ranging disciplines, including Archaeology and the Ancient World, Classics, Public Health, Religious Studies, and Theatre Arts and Performance Studies. Three students graduated from the program in May.

2026 GNSS GRADUATE CERTIFICATE RECIPIENTS

Victoria Cheff, French and Francophone Studies
Augusta da Silveira de Oliveira, History
Alexander Hardan, Musicology & Ethnomusicology



► Gender and Sexuality Studies concentrators at the presentation of their senior capstone projects

► Assistant Professor of Modern Culture and Media Jinying Li gives the 2025-26 Sherman Lecture.

Elizabeth Munves Sherman '77, P'06 '09 Lecture in Gender and Sexuality Studies

The 2025–26 Elizabeth Munves Sherman '77, P'06 '09 Lecture in Gender and Sexuality Studies was delivered by Assistant Professor of Modern Culture and Media Jinying Li. Li's scholarly focus is the analysis of digital culture and media, with an emphasis on Asian media studies. Her work situates digital media within the socio-political context of transnational information capitalism. In "Enclosure and Social Formation: Toward a Media Archeology of the Wall-City," Li examines the formation of "the wall" as a material object, a structural metaphor, and a discursive principle

in the recent history of new media. She argues that while the popular metaphor of windows (understood as representing the boundless flow of knowledge and information across the digital landscape) remains culturally dominant, in fact, the wall (representing enclosure, boundaries, and containment) should be understood as the key organizing principle of modern digital existence.

The lecture can be viewed on the Pembroke Center [YouTube playlist](#).

Spotlight: GNSS Certificate Graduate Augusta da Silveira de Oliveira

This May, Augusta da Silveira de Oliveira graduated from the Brown doctoral program in history with a certificate in gender and sexuality studies (GNSS). In the broader context of her work on the history of LGBTQ+ people in Brazil, de Oliveira's dissertation, "Entendidas or Women in the Know: Lesbian Life in Twentieth-Century Brazil," demonstrates how lesbian subculture in Brazil thrived despite adverse circumstances. She argues that lesbians in twentieth-century Brazil were not, as many assert, invisible, but were in fact hypervisible as deviant figures in state and popular discourses. Despite these negative representations, de Oliveira observes, lesbian women in Brazil found love and built communities.

De Oliveira came to Brown with a three-year Fulbright fellowship in partnership with CAPES, a Brazilian public funding agency, to work with James N. Green, Carlos Manuel de Cespedes Professor of Modern Latin American History and Portuguese and Brazilian

Studies. She was also drawn to the Pembroke Center's GNSS certificate program and was awarded a Pembroke Center Research Development Grant. "I am a person that values community and collaboration," she notes, "so participating in the Pembroke Center's activities expanded the scholarly conversations I wanted to be a part of and was certainly one of the highlights of my time at Brown."

Come fall, de Oliveira will move to Florence, Italy, to start a two-year postdoctoral fellowship. As a Max Weber Fellow at the European University Institute, she will work on her book manuscript, participate in the program's interdisciplinary community, and, she notes, make time to enjoy the beauty of Tuscany.



Research

Pembroke Seminar: The Civic Work of Monuments

“The Civic Work of Monuments,” the Pembroke Seminar for 2025–26, was led by Juliet Hooker, Royce Family Professor of Teaching Excellence in Political Science. Framing the civic work of monuments as a form of “public speech” (Sanford Levinson) and monuments themselves as examples of what Robin Bernstein calls “scriptive things,” that is, elements of material culture that structure human actions, the Seminar addressed questions of who is able to speak through public monuments and what stories about the national past, present, and future we choose to tell through them.

Professor Hooker brought several distinguished speakers to campus to give public research talks and engage with Seminar participants in sustained dialogue. Featured speakers included Mabel O. Wilson, Nancy and George Rupp Professor of Architecture, Planning and Preservation and chair of African American and African Diaspora studies at Columbia University; Sue Mobley, director of research for Monument Lab; and Hamza Walker and Hannah Burstein, director and curatorial associate, respectively, at The Brick, Los Angeles.

2025–26 Pembroke Seminar Fellows

POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWS



Eliana Chavkin
Nancy L. Buc '65, LLD'94 hon.
Postdoctoral Fellow



Rahma Haji
Shauna M. Stark '76, P'10
Postdoctoral Fellow



Maria Camila Palacio Chiriví
Pembroke Center
Postdoctoral Fellow



Miša Stekl
Artemis A.W. and Martha
Joukowsky Postdoctoral Fellow

SEMINAR GRADUATE FELLOWS



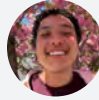
Looghermine Claude
American Studies



Shannon Constantine
Theatre Arts and
Performance Studies



monaye johnson
Africana Studies



Sam Washington
History



Amelle Zeroug
History

SEMINAR FACULTY FELLOWS



Juliet Hooker
Royce Family Professor of
Teaching Excellence in Political
Science, Pembroke Seminar
Leader 2025-26



Alejandra Rosenberg Navarro
Assistant Professor,
Hispanic Studies



Hieyoon Kim
Assistant Professor,
East Asian Studies

UNDERGRADUATE FELLOWS



Samantha Ho
Concentrator, English and
Global Arts and Politics



Jenny Hu
Concentrator, Classics and
International and Public Affairs

“Discrepant Hauntings”: A Seminar Symposium

The Pembroke Seminar culminated in a public symposium, “Discrepant Hauntings, Incongruous Temporalities: Histories and Historiographies of Race and Gender,” organized by the postdoctoral fellows. This symposium grappled with historiographies of race, gender, and sexuality, asking what haunts the things we remember and how. Participants explored the materiality of memory and the politics of remembrance.

Featured speakers included Darius Bost, associate professor of black studies and gender and women’s studies, University of Illinois Chicago; Che Gossett, associate director of The Center for Research in Feminist, Queer, and Transgender Studies, University of Pennsylvania; María Helena Rueda, professor of Spanish and Portuguese, Smith College; and Marita Sturken, professor of media, culture, and communication, New York University.

GRADUATE STUDENT PRIZES AND GRANTS

Marie J. Langlois Dissertation Prize

Semilore Sobande, English

Project: "Ghostwriters: Blackness, Gender, and Nostalgia in Twentieth Century Fiction"

Honorable Mention:

Sarah Christensen, History

Project: "Intimate Histories of Enslaved Women in Early Medieval Europe, 400–1200"

Pembroke Center Research Development Grant for Graduate Students

Elizabeth Berman, Modern Culture and Media and German

Project: "(Re)mediating Damaged Life: Toward a Critique of Repair"

Aidea Downie, Public Health

Project: "The Potential Role of a Size-Inclusive and Anti-Weight Stigma Framework in Perinatal Healthcare within a Rhode Island and New England Context"

Courtney Fitzpatrick, History

Project: "Sylx Cultural Burning Initiative"

Joaquín Marreros Núñez, History

Project: "Peruvian Maricones: Queer Urban Life, Race, and Violence in Twentieth Century Peru"

Luvuyo Nyawose, Modern Culture and Media

Project: "Chronologies of Capture: Saartjie Baartman and the Politics of Mediated Time"

Isabella Schultz, Anthropology

Project: "The Impact of Ujamaa's Legacy, International Aid, and Care in Maternal Health in Tanzania"

UNDERGRADUATE PRIZES AND GRANTS

Ruth Simmons Prize

Reina Salama '26, Sociology and Music

Project: "The Paradox of Punitive Public Health: A Cultural Autopsy of HIV Criminalization in the United States"

Honorable Mentions:

Tigerlily Hillenbrand Arlt '26, Classics and Medieval Cultures

Project: "The Late Medieval *Pilgrimsvegen til Røldal*"

Piper Wallace '26, History

Project: "Performing Distinction at the Philadelphia Dancing Assembly, 1748–94: The Legibility and Stakes of Elite Heterosociability across the Revolutionary Divide"

Joan Wallach Scott Prize

Arlyn Patino '26, Gender and Sexuality Studies

Project: "U.S. Borne: The Pathology of the Mexicana Other, Diasporic Gendered Subjectivity in Chicago from the 1960s Onward"

Barbara Anton Community Research Grant

Emerald Spindler '26, Anthropology

Project: "Repercussions of Systemized Shame in Secondary Pregnancy Prevention for Hispanic Women: Montrose, Colorado, as a Case Study"

Enid Wilson Undergraduate Fellowship

Julia Clark '26, History of Art and Architecture

Project: "Transformed by Water: How Aphrodite Reveals Birth, Life, and Marriage for Women in Greek Society"

Helen Terry MacLeod Research Grant

Tigerlily Hillenbrand Arlt '26, Classics and Medieval Cultures

Project: "The Late Medieval *Pilgrimsvegen til Røldal*"

Linda Pei Undergraduate Research Grant

Francis Parserio '26, Applied Mathematics-Economics

Project: "Cash Box to Bankbook: A Study to Integrate Women Chamas into Kenya's Financial System, January 2–22, 2026"

Steinhaus/Zisson Pembroke Center Research Grants for Undergraduate and Graduate Students

Maria Arieivitch, Sociology

Project: "The Suburban Grassroots: Examining the Durability of Political Outcomes in Small Town America"

Joyce Fu, Integrative Studies

Project: "Reviving Nūshu: Adapting an Ancient Women's Script for the Screen as Cultural Preservation"

Zhujun Ma, Religious Studies

Project: "Ambivalent Morality: Undefined Practices of Mothering in Popular Medical Self-Help Books in 19th- and Early 20th-Century China"

Yilmaz Yeniler, Archaeology and the Ancient World

Project: "Archaeological Knowledge at the Intersection of Race, Gender, and Nationalism: A Comparative Analysis between Turkey and Greece"

Amelle Zeroug, History

Project: "Sexuality and Statecraft: The Strategic and Ideological Weaponization of Gender in the Algerian War of Independence"



▲ Juliet Hooker (center) with the 2025–26 Pembroke Seminar Fellows Eliana Chavkin, Míša Stekl, Rahma Haji, and María Camila Palacio Chiriví.

Pembroke Center Initiatives and Projects

The Black Feminist Theory Project

The Pembroke Center Archives welcomed the following collections as part of the Black Feminist Theory Project in 2025-26:

- [The Deborah E. McDowell papers](#) are now available for research.
- The Cheryl A. Wall papers (addenda, available soon)
- In addition, the Black Feminist Theory Project co-sponsored the Out of the Archives lecture event with Mary Helen Washington and hosted a year-long graduate curatorial proctor (see “Archives”, pages 14-15)



▲ Items from the Deborah E. McDowell papers. This image from the collection is noted as “Norton Anthology editors at Cornell University, 1987.”

The LGBTQIA+ Thinking Initiative

Under the direction of Lynne Joyrich, professor of Modern Culture and Media, the LGBTQIA+ Thinking Initiative hosted the following events in 2025-26:

- The Rainbow Faculty and Staff Mixer: a social event for LGBTQIA+ faculty, staff, friends, and allies to celebrate the start of the academic year
- A film screening and discussion of the cult queer classic *Hedwig and the Angry Inch* (2001) with director John Cameron Mitchell, co-organized with the Brown Arts Institute
- Thinking at Risk: A workshop for Brown and RISD instructors to discuss how certain modes and topics of thought are now in peril and how best to deal with this in the classroom.



▲ Director John Cameron Mitchell in conversation with BAI guest curator Raja Feather Kelly

“The Pembroke Center has been the center of intellectual life for many of us for decades.”

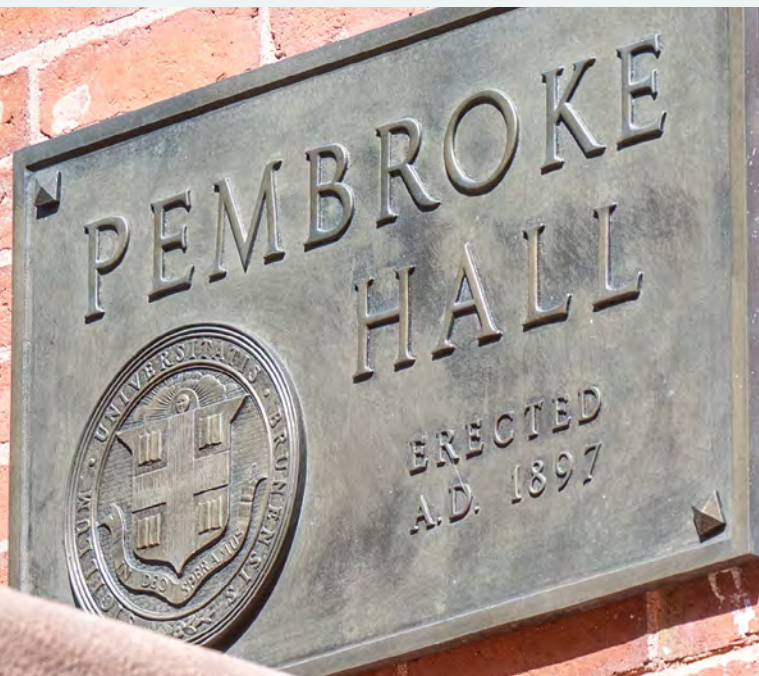
– Judith Butler, 2025 Pembroke Publics Lecture



► Judith Butler delivers the annual Pembroke Publics lecture.

The Pembroke Center Publics Lecture

The Pembroke Center Publics Initiative and Lecture Series brings to Brown guests whose work in any sphere, from academics to activism and beyond, contends with issues of gender and sexuality in a transformative manner. The 2025-26 Pembroke Center Publics speaker was Distinguished Professor in the Graduate School at the University of California, Berkeley Judith Butler. Butler delivered their talk “Variations of Legal Violence” to a packed audience in MacMillan Hall on November 5. Butler, a feminist philosopher and gender and sexuality studies scholar, used Franz Kafka’s 1925 novel *The Trial* (about a man prosecuted for breaking an unidentifiable law) to bore into questions about how the law works, “if it works at all.” Butler considered how and when the law not only excludes people from legal protections but subjects them to such legally sanctioned cruelty as indefinite detention. When an appeal to the law brings not justice but humiliation, Butler asked, where are we to seek justice? In the face of thwarted narrative expectations that would offer any legal rationale, Butler called for a broader political understanding of justice arising from collective action. [Watch Butler’s lecture on the Pembroke Center YouTube playlist.](#)



The Public Health Collaborative

The Director of the Pembroke Center Public Health Collaborative, Sarah Gamble, led the following projects in 2025-26:

- The Reproductive Justice Collaborative, a group of Brown faculty, staff, graduate and undergraduate students engaged in reproductive justice research, policy, and advocacy that met monthly
- A campus visit from Loretta Ross, one of the founders of the reproductive justice movement, co-organized with the Sarah Doyle Center

Gamble also supervised Health Equity Scholar Ambree Robinson, graduate student in the School of Public Health. Members of the RJC collaboratively wrote an [opinion piece](#) for *The Brown Daily Herald* on the impact of the University's agreement with the federal government on trans people's rights and dignity.



▲ Pembroke Public Health Collaborative Director Sarah Gamble and Graduate Research Assistant Ambree Robinson with Loretta Ross, associate professor of the study of women and gender at Smith College

Interdisciplinary Faculty Seed Grants

The Pembroke Center interdisciplinary faculty seed grant program supports research initiatives that involve faculty from the humanities, social sciences, creative arts, health sciences, and science and technology studies. In keeping with the Pembroke Center's intellectual mission, these research initiatives examine intersecting dimensions of difference such as gender, sexuality, generation, work, class, race, ethnicity, language, citizenship, and religion.

The Pembroke Center awarded two faculty seed grants during the 2025-26 academic year for 2026-27 research projects.

Public Health in Crisis: Tracing the Multi-level Impact and Equity Implications of Rape and Domestic Violence Prevention CDC Program Closures

- Faculty project director: Katherine A. Mason, Ph.D.
- Project team members: Alyssa Basmajian, Ph.D.; Sarah S. Willen, Ph.D., MPH

Technologies and/as Prosthetics

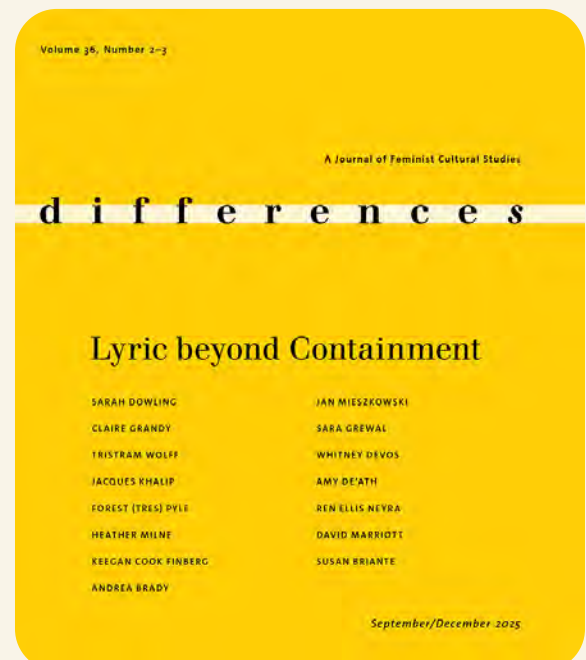
- Faculty project director: Kim Fernandes, Ph.D.
- Project team members: Suresh Venkatasubramanian, Ph.D.; Meredith Mendola, MA

Learn more about [this year's seed grant projects](#).

differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies

differences was founded at the Pembroke Center in 1989 by Elizabeth Weed, then-associate director of the Pembroke Center and later director (2000-2010), and the late feminist theorist and scholar of French literature Naomi Schor. The journal publishes three times a year. *differences* also curates an online forum and hosts an annual colloquium.

In the 2025-26 academic year, the journal released *Lyric beyond Containment*, a double issue edited by Sarah Dowling and Claire Grandy (issues 36.2-3) and *For Whom Do We Read?*, a special issue edited by Peter Szendy (issue 37.1). *Lyric beyond Containment* expands on debates in lyric theory by reconsidering the bounds of poetic and lyric forms. Contributors explore the fictions of lyric subjectivity and aesthetic autonomy, the presumed whiteness of the lyric "I," and the colonial legacies of key lyric theorists. At the same time, they theorize lyric tropes beyond these limitations by considering abstraction, figuration,



apostrophe, confessionalism, and intimacy apart from the presumption of individual expression that still largely defines and derails lyric studies.

Lyric beyond Containment features essays by Tristram Wolff, Jacques Khalip, Forest (Tres) Pyle, Heather Milne, Keegan Cook Finberg, Andrea Brady, Jan Mieszkowski, Sara Grewal, Whitney DeVos, Amy De'Ath, Ren Ellis Neyra, David Marriott, and Susan Briante.

For Whom Do We Read? introduces the notion of the readee. Many theories of reading, with their more or less normative claims, consider the reader and the text. But what seems to be forgotten, especially since reading has come to be considered mainly a silent and solitary activity, is the addressee of reading. This special issue invites literary theorists and historians to engage the question: for whom do we read?

This special issue features essays by Peter Szendy, Emily Apter, Leah Price, Thomas Schestag, Rosalind C. Morris, Emily Greenwood, Jesse McCarthy, Paul North, and Daniel Heller-Roazen.

Limits of Legibility: History under Siege

In March 2026 *differences* hosted the third colloquium in its annual Limits of Legibility series. "History under Siege" featured four speakers (Joan Wallach Scott, Institute for Advanced Study; Omnia El Shakry, Yale University; Korey Williams, University of Chicago; and Gary Wilder, City University of New York) who discussed how the practice of critical history can respond to the current moment. In particular, they sought to answer the question of how critical history can analyze and resist authoritarian attempts to rewrite history without abandoning a theoretical critique of the positivist understanding of facts.



► Limits of Legibility panelists Joan Wallach Scott, Korey Williams, Omnia El Shakry, and Gary Wilder



The Pembroke Center Archives

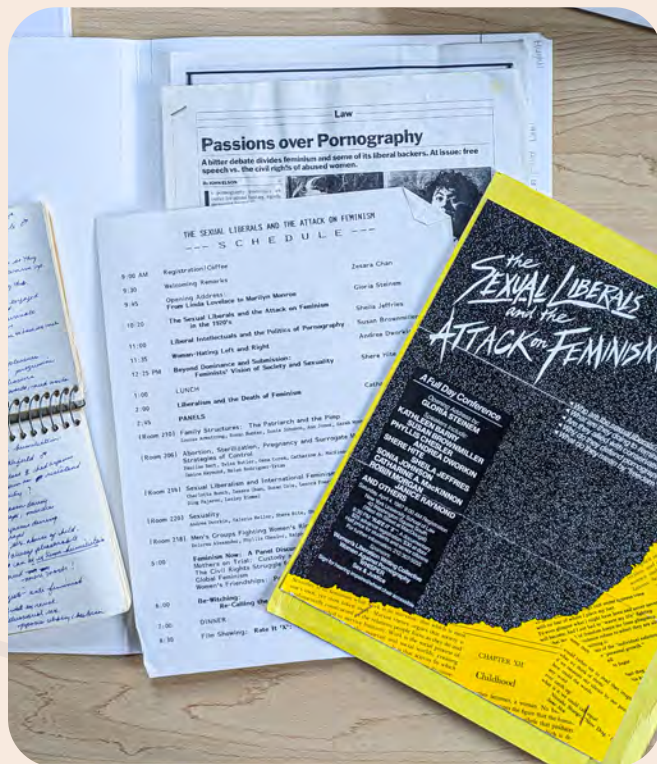
Transnational Feminist Theory Collecting Cluster

This year, the Archives established a new transnational feminist theory collecting cluster within the Feminist Theory Archive. The goal of the cluster is to gather the papers of key interlocutors, enabling researchers to trace ideas, understand collaborations, and construct intellectual genealogies across poststructuralist feminism and postcolonial and transnational scholarship. In this archival framework, the new collections will join the papers of Inderpal Grewal, Caren Kaplan, Mimi Thi Nyugen, and Chandra Mohanty, among others. This new cluster will intersect with our Black Feminist Theory collections.

Timely Collection

As public discussion of sex trafficking continues unabated, 2025–26 saw the Pembroke Center Archives open the papers of Donna M. Hughes, whose research centers the experiences of trafficked women and girls. Professor Emerita who previously held the Eleanor M. and Oscar M. Carlson Endowed Chair in Women's Studies at the University of Rhode Island, Hughes is considered by many to be the founder of the academic study of sex trafficking.

Hughes's emphasis on protecting women from exploitation resonates with certain branches of feminism, even as it provokes debate about agency and empowerment. As contemporary debates persist around gender, sexuality, and individual rights, Hughes's work offers insights into breaking news as well as historical context to feminist movements and politics since the 1970s.



▲ Items from the Donna M. Hughes collection, including a program for a 1987 conference titled "The Sexual Liberals and the Attack on Feminism"

New Collections Available for Research

FEMINIST THEORY ARCHIVE

- [The Ann duCille papers \(addenda\)](#)
- [The Silvia Federici papers \(addenda\)](#)
- [The Margaret W. Ferguson papers \(addenda\)](#)
- [The Marianne Hirsch papers \(addenda\)](#)
- [The Heather Love papers \(addenda\)](#)
- [The Deborah E. McDowell papers](#)
- [The Nancy K. Miller papers \(addenda\)](#)

FEMINIST ACTIVISM IN RHODE ISLAND

- [The Donna M. Hughes papers](#)

WOMEN AND GENDER AT BROWN

The Women and Gender at Brown Archive made the following collections available for research.

- [The Heidi Boghosian '77 papers](#)
- [The Xochitl Gonzalez '99 papers \(addenda\)](#)
- [The Miranda Summers Lowe '09 AM papers](#)
- [The Magel C. Wilder '19 papers](#)
- [The Marietta Burgess Wisbey '16 papers](#)

GENDER, SEXUALITY, AND STATE REPRESSION

This year, the Archives team identified an emerging collecting strength: gender, sexuality, and state repression. Collections identified as fitting for this category center state repression as a site of feminist struggle and comprise the papers of those whose scholarship, activism, or lived experience document the intersection of, for example, mass incarceration and bodily autonomy. Many of these collections overlap with our other collecting areas within feminist scholarship broadly and activism on campus and in Rhode Island. Some of the collections that fall under this category include the [COYOTE Rhode Island records](#), the [Inderpal Grewal papers](#), the [Mumia Abu-Jamal papers](#), and the [Heidi Boghosian papers](#).

Oral History Project

Between July 2025 and June 2026, Archives staff recorded six total interviews with three alumnae and made five interviews available to stream online.

NEWLY RECORDED

- Marissa Lemar, class of 2009, United States Navy
- Sidney-Leigh Okashige, class of 1967
- Lila Shahani, class of 1989 (four parts)

NEWLY AVAILABLE

- [Kloey Albertson, class of 2027](#)
- [Martha Banks, class of 1973](#)
- [Emily Coe-Sullivan, Rachel Reichlin, and Mariah Sixkiller, class of 1999](#)
- [Premal Dharia, class of 2000](#)
- [Becky Scheusner, class of 2018, MPH 2026](#)

PEMBROKE CENTER ORAL HISTORY PROJECT



“I started out representing children in Delinquency Court, some of whom were very young, and that was incredibly jarring and challenging work. But I also can’t really imagine anything more important. I have memories of very young children being arrested ... child after child after child coming in with distraught mothers or family members crying in the hallway. It leaves an indelible mark.”

– Premal Dharia ’00



ARCHIVES STUDENT STAFF



Graduate Archives Assistant
Martina Lancia, Italian Studies



Graduate Curatorial Proctor,
Black Feminist Theory Project
Semilore Sobande, English

► Mary Helen Washington gives her Out of the Archives talk.

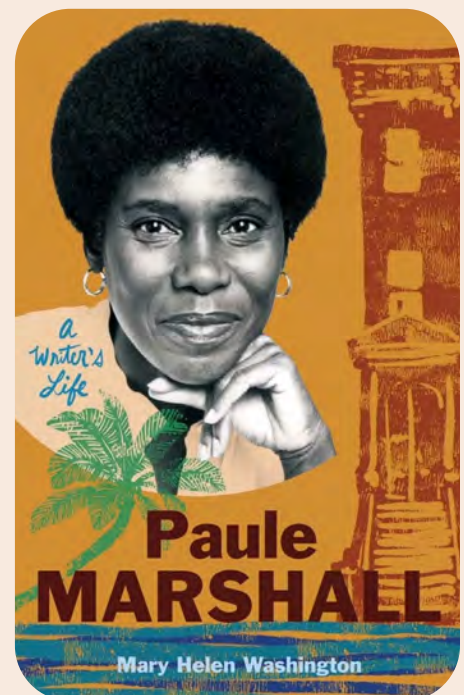


Shauna M. Stark '76, P'10 Out of the Archives Lecture Series

Out of the Archives events feature speakers who have contributed papers to the Pembroke Center Archives. This academic year featured two Out of the Archives lectures: the first by Judith Butler (see “The Publics Lecture,” p. 10) and the second by scholar and biographer Mary Helen Washington (University of Maryland, College Park). Washington spoke about her recently published biography of the writer Paule Marshall, *Paule Marshall: A Writer's Life* (Yale UP, 2026). Weaving together personal stories about her friendship with Marshall and the acquisition of Marshall's papers, Washington highlighted the challenges of creating a cohesive portrait of a person who left very little record of her private life, but whose work is bold, feminist, transnational, and queer. Washington has planned to contribute both her own papers and Marshall's to the Black Feminist Theory Archive at the Pembroke Center Archives.

“One of my favorite teaching moments was when we went to the John Hay Library to do a session with Mary [Murphy] on the Spillers archives. I don't think I've had many experiences where I've gone to an archive as a part of a class, and I was like, I want to do this and we're all going to do it together. The students really enjoyed it, and it was exciting to show that there are really great archives nested here ... It was so interesting seeing students get animated looking at these materials.”

– Rahma Haji, Shauna M. Stark '76, P'10
Postdoctoral Fellow



The Friends of the Pembroke Center

The Friends of the Pembroke Center serve as a vital network of Pembroke Center supporters drawn from alumnae/i, their families, and others who have engaged with the Center's work. This year, Friends programming drew over 150 people online and in person to hear from artists, scholars, authors, and public health experts on topics ranging from mental health to how federal funding cuts have impacted research on gender and sexuality.

On Family Weekend 2025, the Friends sponsored "Power Pieces: Fashion as Armor and the Politics of Dress," a pop-up exhibit and panel discussion that explored fashion as a form of protection and personal and political expression. Featuring five striking examples of "battle dress" from the Pembroke Center Archives, the exhibit offered a lens onto how clothing helps individuals confront hostility, assert presence, and shape identity.

In February, the Friends organized the webinar "No One Gets to Fall Apart: A Conversation about Mental Illness and Family Ties

with Author Sarah LaBrie '07." In her recent memoir *No One Gets to Fall Apart* (2024), LaBrie traces her family history of mental illness, from the dysphoria that plagued her great-grandmother, a granddaughter of slaves, to her own experience with depression as a scholarship student at Brown. LaBrie discussed her book with *Body Wealth Sisters* podcast founder Brenda Barbour '86.

The Friends sponsored a Commencement Weekend 2026 panel discussion. "Research at Risk" examined legislative, political, and cultural pressures shaping the future of research on gender and sexuality. Experts from public health and the biological sciences considered strategies for advocacy and protecting vital research in uncertain times.

In addition to programming that expands the Center's reach and impact, Friends of the Pembroke Center also raise funds to support the Center's work. All the Friends programs can be viewed on the Pembroke Center [YouTube playlist](#).



► Power Pieces: Moderator Denise Davis A.M. '97, Ph.D. '11, associate teaching professor of gender and sexuality studies with panelists Karen Akilah Marks, Ph.D. candidate, American studies; madison moore, John Atwater and Diana Nelson Assistant Professor of the Arts; and artist Liz Collins RISD BFA '91, MFA '99



— Research at Risk: Katie Biello, Provost's Professor of Epidemiology and Behavioral and Social Sciences, School of Public Health (moderator); Shufang Sun, associate professor of behavioral and social sciences and psychiatry and human behavior, School of Public Health; Anne Fausto-Sterling, Nancy Duke Lewis Professor Emerita of Biology; Gray Babbs, Ph.D. candidate, health services, policy, and practice, School of Public Health



“I climb the steps and stop at the door of my mother’s room and she opens it wide, as if she had been expecting me. She sits back down in her desk chair and I watch her sway from side to side and sing. I search her face for a sign of the woman who raised me, buried embers softly glowing. From a certain angle in the low-lit room, I can almost see her. From another, I can see my grandmother and from another, myself. I breathe on the flames, fan them with my mind, will them not to burn out, try to send them strength to grow.”

– Sarah LaBrie, *No One Gets to Fall Apart*

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The buildings adjacent to this site housed
- PEMBROKE COLLEGE.

Founded in 1891 with six students,
the Women's College in Brown University was
formally established in 1896 and renamed
Pembroke College in 1928. The first women to
receive degrees were Anne Tillinghast Weeden
and Mary Emma Woolley in 1894. In 1971,
the merger of Pembroke College with the
College of Brown University was completed,
and coordinate education gave
way to coeducation.

The Tribute is the gift of 1085 Pembroke
alumnae, their families, and their friends.



BROWN
Pembroke Center

Brown University
172 Meeting Street
Providence, RI 02912
pembrokecenter.org

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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► Pembroke Center Director of Academic Programs and Outreach Wendy Lee, Assistant Professor of Modern Culture and Media Jinying Li, Center Director Leela Gandhi, and Associate Teaching Professor of Gender and Sexuality Studies Denise Davis at the annual Sherman Lecture