“Archives Make History: The Pembroke Collections” Conference Recap

“I hope you’ll indulge me in a fantasy. It’s 2027... one of my former students, now a tenured professor, [is teaching] the required “Feminist Theory” course, using the archives as a basis for the course syllabus. Let us call her ‘Niccole.’”

Thus began Professor Marianne Hirsch ’70, AM’70, PhD’75 in her keynote for the “Archives Make History: The Pembroke Collections” conference on March 10, 2017. In her address titled “Archives of Possibility,” Hirsch recounted a futuristic dream of a professor who incorporates archival research into her teaching thanks to the Pembroke Center’s preservation efforts. Hirsch posited that by studying original documents, future scholars could better understand the “lines of influence within and across generations of feminist theorists.”

The Pembroke Center maintains two archives in partnership with the Brown University Library: the Christine Dunlap Farnham Archive, which preserves the history of women at Brown University and in Rhode Island; and the Feminist Theory Archive, which documents the lives of feminist theorists who have transformed the very meaning of feminist research. The conference explored how these two important collections were built and why researchers find them so valuable.

During the conference’s first panel, “Building the Archives,” speakers described the items that they donated to the Pembroke Center archives and the significance of each item. Mimi Pichey ’72 bequeathed her personal records from Women of Brown United, a group that started in 1970 and that she described as “a rallying point on campus during those years for feminism.” PhD candidate Arlen Austin explained how he came to work with Marxist feminist scholar Silvia Federici, and how he is assisting her in donating her papers to the Feminist Theory Archive.

Professor Johanna Fernandez ’93 talked about her involvement with Students for Admissions and Minority Aid (SAMA), the group that overtook University Hall in 1992 to advocate for need-blind admissions. Fernandez read from a letter dated April 27, 1992 that she brought to the conference and donated to the Farnham Archive. The letter describes how the SAMA movement influenced a fellow student “to be a different person in the world.”

A pivotal moment in Brown’s history is represented by Anne Fausto-Sterling’s contribution to the archives. The retired biology and gender studies professor donated her extensive collection of papers about the Louise Lamphere v. Brown University case—the sex discrimination lawsuit filed against Brown in 1975. Included was Fausto-Sterling’s personal, marked-up copy of

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From the Director

As we turn the corner into spring, we at the Pembroke Center are marking milestones and planning new events for the next several months.

On March 10, we held a stimulating conference called “Archives Make History: The Pembroke Collections.” The event kicked off with a keynote address by Professor Marianne Hirsch ’70, AM ’70, PhD ’75 titled “Archives of Possibility.” Her talk was followed by two panels that explored the processes of collecting, building, and using the archives. During the second panel, we were thrilled to hear from some of our own students, including former Pembroke Center Undergraduate Fellow Peter Mackhoul ’16 and current Brown sophomore Shira Buchsbaum ’19 about their own discoveries in the archives and their appreciation for having access to such valuable materials.

The conference celebrated the completion of the $3.5 million Pembroke Center Archives Endowment Campaign. The funds we raised—including an additional $200,000 over our original goal—will enable us to expand our Christine Dunlap Farnham and Feminist Theory Archives. That evening, we honored Nancy L. Buc, Class of 1965, for her leadership in this successful campaign and announced that we have named our newly established full-time archivist position The Nancy L. Buc ’65, ’94 LLD hon. Pembroke Center Archivist. In appreciation for Buc’s outstanding service, congratulatory remarks were offered by Brown University President Christina Paxson and others. See the cover story for more details about this wonderful event.

This May, we are thrilled to be participating in the 125 Years of Women at Brown conference presented by the Women’s Leadership Council. Our panel “Changing Faces and Facing Change: Diversifying Higher Education in America” will explore whether educational institutions are keeping up with the social and intellectual diversity of the global economy. Moderator Tanya Hernandez ’86, P ’20 will lead a panel of Brown alumnae and academic professionals, including Christine Grant ’84, Joelle Murchison ’95, Hanna Rodriguez-Farrar ’87, AM ’90, PhD ’09, and Susan P. Sturm ’76.

We have plans for an exciting Commencement Forum on Saturday, May 27. “Launchers and Leaders: Brown Women and Entrepreneurship” will feature moderator Deb Mills-Scofield ’82 and panelists Morra Aarons-Mele ’82, Sarah Carson ’02, Darlene Currie ’87, and Sadie Kurzban ’12. Co-sponsored by the Pembroke Center and the Jonathan M. Nelson Center for Entrepreneurship, these successful Brown alumnae will discuss how gender shapes entrepreneurial choices, support, access to capital, and innovation.

While you are on campus, make sure to see the Lamphere exhibit, which was remounted by the Pembroke Center this semester, also as part of the Women’s Leadership Council’s 125 Years of Women at Brown conference. This exhibit illustrates how a controversial sex discrimination case changed the face of the university. It will be on display in Pembroke Hall through the end of May.

We are grateful to all of our generous alumnae/i, donors, and friends who have enabled us to support the work of researchers, students, and faculty. We look forward to continuing these efforts.

Sincerely,
Suzanne Stewart-Steinberg P’19
Director
Archives Make History (Continued from page 1)

the Brown Daily Herald that reported on the case’s settlement, which would ultimately change Brown’s processes for hiring and promoting faculty.

A “funny item” was donated to the archives by Professor Ann duCille MFA’73, AM’88, PHD’91, a so-called “Jamaican Barbie doll” that she discovered years ago while shopping. “I’m half Jamaican, and to me this item looked like an anorexic Aunt Jemima,” laughed duCille. Years ago, she had brought it to a meeting at the Pembroke Center and used the toy as an example of failed pluralism that, as she explained, “simply adds ‘the other’ and doesn’t change anything.” “I hope that [the doll] will suggest to others how a simple piece of plastic… can really become a way of talking about more important elements,” proposed duCille.

HOW ORAL HISTORY PREVENTS ERASURE

During the conference, discussions emerged about the value of oral history in supplementing more traditional, physical archives. Speakers and attendees agreed that recorded narratives enrich the historical record and pry open the emotional life of the past.

During a particularly poignant moment, duCille offered an on-the-spot oral history, describing her experience teaching at Hamilton College during the 1970s. The former English professor disclosed that her proposed literature course, “The Black Presence in American Literature,” was rejected due to its “innovative, experimental, and modern” content. Hamilton offered to continue to pay her salary with the stipulation that she not teach the class. In response, duCille resigned, and she would not land another full-time tenure track position for 11 years.

DuCille chose to place this emotional story into the Pembroke Center’s archives. She reflected, “I think the Feminist Theory Archives show us [that] one should always resist being erased from her own history.”

Buchsbaum spoke with reverence about the process of researching the papers of Mary Elizabeth Sharpe (1884–1985) in the prestigious Special Collections Reading Room of the John Hay Library. She described the moment when a cart arrived containing 20 boxes of Sharpe’s personal papers, part of the Christine Dunlap Farnham Archive. Noted Buchsbaum, “Being able to handle those documents so intimately was a really profound experience.”

Guilmette echoed experiencing those feelings of awe while inspecting philosopher Teresa Brennan’s physical files. “There is something about coming across [her] little Post-it’s,” enthused Guilmette. “I never met this person… but I feel this closeness to her.”

At the conference’s closing, duCille praised the panel. “I really want to both thank and applaud this panel of young scholars,” she said, “because we don’t give value to our work, you do.”
Pembroke Center Spring 2017 Events

We are pleased to present programs on a range of topics, led by Brown’s faculty and alumnae/i. These events, held on and off campus, are among the ways in which the Associates work to connect the public with issues related to the Pembroke Center’s research and teaching.

NYC ASSOCIATES PROGRAM
A screening of The 100 Years Show and discussion with filmmaker Alison Klayman ’06 and other Brown friends, Leslie Camhi and Karen E. Jones ’97, about women and other historically underrepresented groups getting their due in the art world.

May 10, 2017
6:30 - 8:30 pm
Magno Sound & Video
729 7th Ave., New York City

Space is limited and registration is required. Please RSVP to Martha Hamblett at martha_hamblett@brown.edu or 401.863.3433 by May 5.

A Toast to Our Supporters

On the evening of March 10, 2017, a dinner was held to celebrate the conclusion of the $3.5 million Pembroke Center Archives Endowment Campaign and to thank all of the donors and supporters who made the fundraising effort so successful. Led by Nancy L. Buc, Class of 1965, the Campaign raised an additional $200,000 over the original goal. These funds will be used to expand the Christine Dunlap Farnham and Feminist Theory Archives, which were the focus of a wonderful conference held earlier that day. (See cover story)

Pembroke Center Director Suzanne Stewart-Steinberg P’19 welcomed former directors of the Center, Karen Newman, Ellen Rooney, Elizabeth Weed, and Kay Warren, as well as former associate director, Professor Debbie Weinstein ’93, and former Pembroke Center Associates Council chairs, Jean Howard ’70 and Liz Sherman ’77, P’06, P’09. Other special guests included members of Brown’s faculty, staff, and administration, including Dean of the Faculty Kevin McLaughlin, Senior Vice President for Advancement Pat Watson, and members of the Pembroke Center Faculty Advisory and Gender and Sexuality Studies Boards.

Pembroke Center Associates Council Chair Victoria Westhead ’83, P’17, P’19 thanked three alumnae for their generous contributions and hard work on behalf of the Center: Elizabeth Sherman ’77, P’06, P’09 and Anita Spivey ’74, P’09; and Shauna McKee Stark ’76, P’10, who made a special gift to ensure that the Pembroke Center met its $3.5 million goal. Westhead announced that the “Out of the Archive” lecture series had been renamed in Stark’s honor.

A special tribute was offered to Nancy L. Buc for her outstanding service and commitment to the Pembroke Center and Brown. Matthew J. Mallow ’64, LHD’08 hon., P’02 thanked Buc for her unswerving devotion and loyalty to her alma mater, and described her as the “feminist voice of the Corporation.” Professor Karen Newman recognized Buc for her generous philanthropy, her passionate activism, and her strong leadership at Brown and beyond. Lastly, President Christina Paxson announced that the Pembroke Center’s archivist position will henceforth bear the title, Nancy L. Buc ’65, ’94 LLD hon. Pembroke Center Archivist.

2017 COMMENCEMENT FORUM - “LAUNCHERS AND LEADERS: BROWN WOMEN AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP”
Saturday, May 27, 2017
11:00 am
Room 120, List Art Building

Join Brown alumnae Deb Mills-Scofield ’82, Morra Aarons-Mele ’98, Sarah Carson ’02, Darlene Currie ’87, and Sadie Kurzban ’12 in a conversation about the challenges and opportunities for women entrepreneurs. How does gender shape entrepreneurial choices, support, access to capital, and innovation? What does entrepreneurship mean to women today?

This event is co-sponsored by the Pembroke Center and the Jonathan M. Nelson Center for Entrepreneurship.

THE LAMPERATURE CASE: THE SEX DISCRIMINATION LAWSUIT THAT CHANGED BROWN

Now through May 28, 2017
Monday–Friday, 8:30 am – 5:00 pm
(with additional hours on Commencement Weekend)

Pembroke Hall lobby
172 Meeting Street, Providence

The Lamphere exhibit was remounted by the Pembroke Center this semester as part of the Women’s Leadership Council’s 125 Years of Women at Brown conference. This Pembroke Center exhibit explores in detail the Lamphere case and its consequences for Brown. Based on extensive archival research and oral histories with key participants, the exhibit paints a vivid picture of why and how Brown changed during a key moment in its history and of the feminist activism that drove that change.

Brown University President Christina Paxson recognized Nancy L. Buc, Class of 1965, as “one of Pembroke’s finest, and a true Brown trailblazer.”
Student Research Grant Recipients 2016–17

The Pembroke Center’s competitive research grant program is open to undergraduate and graduate students from any concentration or field. Grants help pay for travel, fieldwork, archival research, equipment, interview transcriptions, and more.

Girija Borker
Graduate Student,
Department of Economics

STEINHAUS/ZISSON RESEARCH GRANT

Safety First: Perceived Risk of Street Harassment and Educational Choices of Women

Girija Borker’s project examines the impact of street harassment on college choice of women in Delhi. She assesses whether avoidance behavior associated with harassment makes women choose lower-ranked colleges compared to men and whether women undertake other coping behavior such as choosing safe but expensive routes or modes of travel. Ultimately, the project aims to quantify the tradeoffs women face between quality, safety, and costs while making education choices.

It is well established that wide gender gaps in parental investments and human capital investments transform into even wider gender gaps in lifetime earnings. This project identifies an additional mechanism—the lack of safety—that perpetuates gender inequality. Analysis is based on primary survey data on college students, safety data from a mobile application and route mapping from Google Maps. In this, the first study to add harassment risk associated with travel to a model of college choice, Girija's project provides a more holistic view of the factors that affect educational choices of women.

Sage Fanucchi-Funes ’17
Gender and Sexuality Studies
American Studies

BARBARA ANTON INTERNSHIP GRANT

Class and Racial Entanglements in Contemporary Midwifery

For her honors thesis in American Studies, Sage Fanucchi-Funes is writing an ethnography concerning the relationship between midwifery, biomedicalization, and pregnancy in the United States. Her research is focused on the Rhode Island population and draws both on field work and in-depth interviews of providers and patients.

Fanucchi-Funes is looking to address the ways in which midwifery works both on and against the biomedicalization and professionalization of birth. Midwives are often seen as simply working against the medical framework that has depended on the disenfranchisement of black women, women of color, and low-income women in the United States. Yet, the midwifery profession in the United States is complex and their practice can often reflect inequalities built into our society writ large. But their implication in reproducing these injustices are often invisibilized by dominant narratives. Her research will interrogate the role of the midwife in achieving birth and reproductive justice for marginalized people.

Javier Fernandez Galeano
Graduate Student,
Department of History

STEINHAUS/ZISSON RESEARCH GRANT

The Argentinean Lesbian Feminist Movement

In this research project, Fernandez Galeano will collect and analyze oral and written sources about the role of lesbian feminism in the emergence of the first movement for sexual liberation in Argentina, the Frente de Liberación Homosexual—or FLH—(Homosexual Liberation Front) which was founded in 1971 and disbanded in 1976, when the military came to power. Argentinean lesbian activists and groups such as Safo mediated between the feminist movement and the FLH, and contributed to the theoretical foundations and strategies of the group. By focusing on this case study, he hopes to provide an alternative to traditional narratives about LGBTQ activism that have marginalized countries such as Argentina and the perspectives and initiatives of lesbian feminists.
Camille Garnsey ’17
Latin American Studies and Public Health

STEINHAUS/ZISSON RESEARCH GRANT
The History of Reproductive Rights in Cuba

For her Latin American and Caribbean Studies senior thesis, Camille Garnsey is studying the history of reproductive rights in Cuba, the country with the most liberal abortion policies in all of Latin America. Focusing on three specific historical moments and utilizing a mixed-methodology approach, she is analyzing reproductive health policy, discourses surrounding questions of reproduction and the impact of policy change on the lives, perspectives, and decisions of Cuban women with the goal of constructing a focused and dynamic history of the evolution of reproductive choice in Cuba throughout the 20th century.

Garnsey will work to accomplish this goal by posing engaging questions like: can access to abortion and contraception alone ensure women have full control over their reproduction? Do the complicated motives behind seemingly progressive reproductive policy complicate how women experience them? What can we learn from the trajectory of reproductive health policy in Cuba about other factors that limit choice?

Katherine Grusky ’17
History and Latin American Studies

ENID WILSON UNDERGRADUATE TRAVEL FELLOWSHIP
Digging below the Surface: Gender and Family Relations in Chilean Copper Mine, El Teniente, 1904–1930

World War I increased the global demand of copper, leading to an age of “new copper mining in Chile.” Driven by the Chilean government’s favorable foreign investment, the El Teniente mine was bought by New York-based Braden Copper Company in 1904. From 1915–1930, in order to keep up with copper demand, new technologies were imported to increase production. The company needed a permanent and skilled workforce to operate the new machinery and keep the mine running. To establish a permanent workforce, the company implemented rules and regulations that incentivized male-headed, nuclear families: if miners were in stable families, they would be more likely to stay in the mining town for longer periods of time.

These regulations were not created in a vacuum, but were the result of North American and Chilean culture coming together in a rapidly transforming world shaped by the global market and changing and complicated conceptions of gender and family. Grusky’s project will be a comparative study of the ideals of the middle class between Chile and Progressive-Era America and an exploration of how the convergence and clash of those ideals played out in the lives of women and families in the El Teniente mine.

Alice Hamblett ’17
Anthropology

LINDA PEI UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH GRANT
Maternal Health Care as a Measure and Determinant of Gender Equality in Cuba

The Cuban maternal health care system has been internationally praised for its yielding of positive statistical outcomes. Through her thesis, Alice Hamblett seeks to explore the role that the Cuban state plays in both reforming and perpetuating gender ideologies via the maternal health care system. Hamblett will examine two dueling effects of this comprehensive, state-funded system. Specifically, what positive impacts does the Cuban state’s financial and institutional support of women’s reproductive health have on gender culture? Conversely, does the extensive care provided by the Cuban state re-inscribe gender stereotypes of women’s frailty and need for biomedical intervention?

Rather than rest upon the widely adopted, positive correlation between maternal health care and gender equality, Hamblett will ask how the Cuban maternal health care system might set an international standard for care and feminist progress while simultaneously re-inscribing negative gender ideology. Hamblett hopes her research will lead to engagement with themes that extend beyond her essential inquiries. These include the impacts of government spending on gender equality, the relationship between a socialist state and cultural change, and the intersection of the social and the clinical.
Lydia Kelow-Bennett
Graduate Student,
Department of Africana Studies

STEINHAUS/ZISSON
RESEARCH GRANT

Conjuring Freedom: A Black Feminist Meditation for Neoliberal Times

The goal of Lydia Kelow-Bennett's dissertation project is understanding the historical inheritances and present-day investments of Black feminists as the Black feminist tradition they emerge from becomes a more visible ideological intervention into the political and social landscape of the U.S. in the new millennium. Her project is especially concerned with the voices, ideas, and people that are left out of present-day constructions of popular Black feminisms.

Black women’s intellectual work has long operated in spaces of marginalization—both within Black intellectual circles and within mainstream spaces of knowledge production. Kelow-Bennett’s project assesses how, why, and with what impact Black feminist thinkers become a more visible part of public political and social discourse and examines the marginalization of radical Black feminism and womanism. She is creating a genealogy of radical Black feminist resilience that she hopes can propel Black feminists into new spaces of possibility.

Vi Mai ’17
Latin American and Caribbean Studies

HELEN TERRY MACLEOD
RESEARCH GRANT

Contesting HIV/AIDS in Cuba: The Stories behind the Headlines

Since the 1959 revolution, Cuba has prided itself of its healthcare achievements, particularly its status as having one of the lowest HIV infection rates and being the first country to eradicate mother-to-child HIV transmission. It attributes these achievements to the country’s HIV/AIDS treatment and prevention program. While the Cuban government sees the program as an effective healthcare model, the Cuban exile community sees it as unethical and ineffective and uses it as a point of criticism against the communist government. Since its emergence on the island in 1986, HIV/AIDS has been a site of political contention between the Cuban government and its exile community.

As the Cuban government was confronted with a growing number of gay and bisexual men testing seropositive in the early 1990s, the epidemic became a site for negotiation over social norms related to gender and sexuality as well. Mai’s thesis seeks to understand these phenomena by examining discourses around HIV/AIDS in the Cuban and the Cuban American press and media from 1985 to 1995. It consists mainly of archival research, utilizing newspapers, interviews, and official statistics to analyze the history and coverage of Cuba’s HIV/AIDS epidemic both on and off the island.

Andrea Zhu ’17
Development Studies

ENID WILSON
UNDERGRADUATE TRAVEL FELLOWSHIP

Specter of the Past, Intrusion of the Future: Gender and (Im)mobility at the China-Myanmar Border

Once a locus of illicit drug trade, the border province of Yunnan is now rapidly transforming into the frontier of China’s regional integration policy with Southeast Asia. In conducting ethnography and interviews with youth in a rural village at this border, Zhu observed a feeling of stagnation, both physical and social, that persisted among them. Young women felt urges to leave the village that external expectations kept them from pursuing, while young men resisted familial pressure to migrate and find work.

Zhu’s thesis is an attempt to understand these different states of immobility in the context of China’s border development and the gendered imaginaries of a collective past and urban futurity that come with it. Her project aims to bring theories of time and memory to bear on the more traditional development subjects of infrastructure and migration. It also hopes to make space, amid the vast literature on rural-to-urban migration and women in cities, for a study of gender and immobility in rural China. Zhu will use grant funds to conduct more fieldwork in Yunnan.
I’d like to make a gift to the Pembroke Center Associates!

Membership gifts to the Pembroke Center Associates support the research, teaching, archives, and alumnae/i programs sponsored by the Pembroke Center.

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