

*Friends of the*

# PEMBROKE CENTER

## Newsletter

## The Center Recognizes Exceptional Student Research

On topics ranging from marriage regulation and reproductive decision-making to post-emancipation realities on the ground, five undergraduate students and one newly minted PhD won Pembroke Center prizes and grants for their extraordinary research.



**Lyle Cherneff '21** won both the **Ruth Simmons Prize in Gender and Women's Studies** and the **Joan Wallach Scott Prize** for an outstanding honors thesis in Gender and Sexuality Studies for "The Ties That Bind: Incest and Family-Making in the Postbellum South." The thesis explores how the socially constructed idea of "home"

as a safe place conflicts with the reality of nineteenth-century Southern households, which he identifies in his thesis as the locus of "an unprecedented explosion of domestic violence." In the work, Lyle explores white patriarchy and incest, marriage regulation, the sexual and familial structure of the slave plantation, and miscegenation laws that persisted into the twentieth century.

In conferring both awards to the work, the prize committee commented, "Cherneff's research advances our understanding of patriarchy, kinship, the roots of white supremacy, Southern jurisprudence, and intersubjective relations under slavery and in its aftermath through careful readings of case law, newspaper accounts, and letters. Discursive analysis of the figure of 'home' exposes its contradictory affective valences, the site at once of ideals of safety, security and privacy and of violence, confinement, and secrecy."

It is very unusual for the Pembroke Center to give both prizes to the same thesis—in fact, this is the first time the Pembroke Center has done so. This speaks to the truly exceptional caliber of "The Ties That Bind: Incest and Family-Making in the Postbellum South." While Lyle's superlative thesis rose to the top this year, the judges were faced with an impossibly competitive pool of theses, and felt compelled to recognize the work of two additional undergraduate scholars whose theses they judged to be outstanding.



**Gemma Sack '21** was granted honorable mention for the **Ruth Simmons Prize** for her thesis "Selling Mrs. Procreator: Eugenics, Homemaking, and American Nationalism in Women's Magazines, 1929-1939." Bringing together several discursive threads—including gender, race, reproduction, and consumption—in a project drawing on historical, theoretical, scholarly, and popular

sources, this thesis examines the interconnections of eugenics, domesticity, and the fortification of the American way of life in mass-market women's magazines of the 1930s. The mutually reinforcing politics of home and nation during the interwar period are clearly evident, the thesis argues, in popular magazines targeting women as the reproducers of a particular ideological form of the family.

## PEMBROKE CENTER ADVISORY COUNCIL

Anne Buehl '88, *Chair*

Sophie Waskow Rifkin '07, *Vice-Chair*

### Members

Pamela Arya '84, P'18

Bernicestine McLeod Bailey '68, P'99, '03

Emily Coe-Sullivan '99

Marcia R. Ely '80

Johanna Fernandez '93

Yvonne P. Goldsberry '82

Ryan G. W. Grubbs '10

Tanya K. Hernández '86, P'20

Ulle Holt '66, AM'92, PhD'00, P'93, '02

Ellen Hunter '04

Barbara Dugan Johnson '83, P'16

Carol M. Lemlein '67, P'90

Joan Hoost McMaster '60

Leslie Newman '75 AM'75, P'08, '12

Lorine Pendleton '91

Gwenn Masterman Snider '83, P'13

Leah Sprague '66

Shauna M. Stark '76, P'10

Irene Sudac '81, P'17

Judith Surkis '92

Leora Tanenbaum '91

Kimberly Wachtler '13

Donna Zaccaro '83, P'19

### Ex Officio

Nancy L. Buc '65

Joan MacLeod Heminway '83

Jean Howard '70

Susan Adler Kaplan '58 MAT'65

Anne Jones Mills '60

Diane Lake Northrop '54, P'81, GP'13, '16

Chelsey C. Remington '61, P'89, '92

Eileen Rudden '72, P'03, P'07, '11

Phyllis K. Santry '66

Elizabeth Munves Sherman '77, P'06, '09

Anita Spivey '74, P'09

Mary A. Vascellaro '74, P'07

Jasmine Waddell '99

Victoria Westhead '83, P'17, '19

Beverly H. Zweiman '66, P'01

## PEMBROKE CENTER STAFF

Leela Gandhi

*Director*

Denise Davis '97 A.M., '11 Ph.D.

*Editor, differences; Senior Lecturer in GNSS;*

*Director of the Graduate Program in GNSS*

Donna Goodnow P'07

*Center Manager*

Martha Hamblett P'17

*Programs and Stewardship Coordinator*

Gillian Kiley

*Communications Manager*

Amanda Knox

*Assistant Archivist*

Rebecca Laiho

*Development Associate*

Mary Murphy, Nancy L. Buc '65

*Pembroke Center Archivist*

Darcy Pinkerton '14

*Development Officer*

Diane Straker

*Administrative Assistant*

# DID YOU KNOW?



**TOP:** Professor Ada G. Wing and her anatomy class, 1900.

**LEFT:** Pembroke Hall, the first official home of the Women's College in Brown University, dedicated November 22, 1897.



The 2021-22 academic year marks the 130th anniversary of women at Brown, the Pembroke Center's 40th anniversary, and the 50th anniversary of Title IX. The Pembroke Center looks forward to celebrating these landmark anniversaries with the broader Brown community.

## Exceptional Student Research , *continued*



The thesis by **Cal Turner '21**, “The Virtue of the Virago: Gender-Crossing Difference and the Social Life of the Early Modern Female Crossdresser” was awarded honorable mention for the **Ruth Simmons Prize** for its insightful analysis of two seventeenth-century literary accounts of female crossdressing, one from England and the other written

in Spain. This thesis understands female crossdressing not as an instrumental act or a narrative device, but as a mode of relational and social being in the world. Reading the female crossdresser as a profoundly social figure who develops routes toward relationship through the mark of difference that crossdressing constitutes, this thesis finds present-day trans resonances in a historical lineage of counternarratives of gendered existential states.



History and Africana studies concentrator **Connor Jenkins '22** was awarded the **Barbara Anton Community Research Grant** for his project “Fear gave speed to our steps’: Slavery’s Hauntings and the Long Lives of Plantation Geographies in Edenton, North Carolina from 1850 to 1880.”

The grant supports undergraduate students doing an honors thesis

involving community work related to the welfare of women and children. Describing his plan for this project, Connor said, “In 1861, Harriet Jacobs anonymously published her narrative about her escape from slavery. In the 1970s, historians located Jacobs’ enslavement in Edenton, North Carolina. To understand regional (mis-)remembering of slavery, I will map Edenton geographies and lineages pre-1865 and post-1865 through correspondence and newspapers. By interviewing Edentonians, I will investigate antebellum legacies in modern space and gender roles. This project simply asks: what changed in Edenton after emancipation? Much historiography considers slavery through geography and gender, yet local histories often omit these analytics. Calculated local forgetting of slavery undergirds spectacular insurrectionary activity and quotidian structural inequality, rendering this project urgent and timely.”



**Sabrina Bajwa '21.5**, a gender and sexuality studies and Hispanic studies concentrator, won the **Helen Terry MacLeod Research Grant** for her project “Reproductive (In)justice in Detention.”

Describing her project, Sabrina said, “In September 2020, whistleblower Dawn Wooten drew attention to allegations of forced hysterectomies at Irwin County

Detention Center in Georgia. Just two years prior, the Trump administration found itself embroiled in a legal battle as the Office of Refugee Resettlement denied pregnant minors’ access to abortion in detention. Through archival work, reviewing key court cases, and conducting interviews with current organizers, my research traces the historical incorporation of reproductive coercion within immigration politics to illuminate how these seemingly contradictory anti-birth and anti-abortion pushes exist simultaneously. In considering these examples in conversation, I highlight the creative efforts of activists in urging for a reproductive justice-based movement to dismantle the white supremacy underlying the convergence of reproductive coercion and anti-immigration politics.”

## Marie J. Langlois Dissertation Prize



Dr. **Whitney Arey**, who completed her PhD in the Department of Anthropology at Brown this spring as well as a graduate certificate in Gender and Sexuality Studies, won the Marie J. Langlois Dissertation Prize for “Abortion as Care: Affective and Biosocial Experiences of Abortion Access and Decision-Making.” The Langlois Prize recognizes

an outstanding dissertation in areas related to gender studies or feminist analysis, and confers a \$1000 honorarium.

The dissertation, which is based on 18 months of ethnographic field research that Arey conducted in and around two abortion clinics in her home state of North Carolina, considers how the politicized space of the abortion clinic makes possible novel forms of care.



Describing her work, Arey says, “I argue that this politicization makes the formation of temporary biosocial relationships with strangers possible. I explore the role that family, friends, partners, healthcare workers, and anti-abortion protesters play in abortion access. I show how patients’ already constrained access abortion care is made possible by, and sometimes made more difficult by, their relationships with others.”

Arey conducted her ethnographic research during a time when North Carolina and a number of other states were passing numerous laws to restrict abortion access. Daniel Jordan Smith, professor of anthropology, Charles C. Tillinghast ’32 Professor of International Studies, and Arey’s dissertation advisor, described the dissertation as grounded in empirical observation and informed by cutting-edge theory. She created “a contextually-grounded account and a nuanced understanding of an issue about which conventional narratives provide simplistic, black-and-white interpretations,” Smith said.

Katherine A. Mason, Vartan Gregorian Assistant Professor of Anthropology at Brown and Arey’s mentor, concurred: “Whitney’s dissertation is a transformative account of abortion in the US that gets away from tired conversations about personal choice and personal responsibility, and instead shows us how abortion decisions, procedures, and recovery – as well as the meaning that people make of these experiences – are the results of complex negotiations between the pregnant person and a number of other parties.”

Arey, who was a 2020-21 Interdisciplinary Fellow at the Pembroke Center and was the head teaching assistant for the Gender and Sexuality Studies program course “Introduction to Gender and Sexuality Studies,” charted new territory by attending to the conversations that women considering an early, routine abortion have with their partners and with other family members and friends as they make the decision about whether to have an abortion or not, according to Smith, and her dissertation promises to make significant contributions to scholarship on the anthropology of reproduction, the anthropology of bioethics, and to broader humanistic studies of gender, ethics, kinship, and violence. ■



## A Gender Perspective on Women and Enterprise



## On Both Sides of the Lens: Latin American Women Filmmakers



# Summer Semester 2021

As part of Brown’s effort to keep the University community safe and de-densify campus, the 2020-21 academic year included a summer semester. This summer, the Pembroke Center offered two Gender and Sexuality Studies program courses: “A Gender Perspective on Women and Enterprise,” which laid bare the mechanisms driving a pattern of economic inequality affecting the female population of every nation, and “On Both Sides of the Lens: Latin American Women Filmmakers,” which surveyed how women filmmakers are employing and changing documentary and feature film genres in Latin America.

# Professional and Career Development Opportunities for Brown Students

Over the summer, Brown graduate students enjoyed unique professional training opportunities through proctorships with the Pembroke Center Archives and with *differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies*.



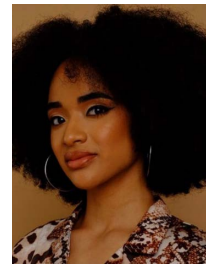
## Pembroke Center Archives Proctorships

The goal of the Pembroke Center Archives Graduate Curatorial Proctorships is to offer graduate students with expertise in gender and sexuality studies the opportunity to cross-train into professional curatorial work. Over the course of this summer, Melaine Ferdinand-King and N’Kosi Oates, both doctoral candidates in the Department of Africana Studies at Brown, learned about archival curation and development through an apprenticeship model with Mary Murphy, the Nancy L. Buc’65 Pembroke Center Archivist, and Ann duCille, Professor of English, Emerita at Wesleyan University and Visiting Scholar in Gender Studies at the Pembroke Center.

N’Kosi and Melaine met weekly with Ann and Mary; conducted research to identify potential donors of papers for the Black Feminist Theory Collections; prepared and presented curatorial “pitches;” created and sent solicitation letters to notable Black feminist scholars; and participated in and led curatorial meetings with interested potential donors. Each also traveled with archives staff to survey and pick up collections.

Melaine Ferdinand-King  
*Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Africana Studies*

Research interests: Black aesthetics and culture, Black feminism, and the Black radical tradition



“I was interested in working with the archives on the Black Feminist Theory Project because I wanted to apply my knowledge of Black feminist theory and history to embodied practices like archiving and curation. As a student of the Black radical and feminist traditions, I’ve treasured the opportunity to engage with work by women who’ve inspired and guided my own Black feminist journey and take part in the preservation of their legacies. It was important to me that our team address the question of ethics in archiving the work of Black women theorists at the start of the proctorship, and I planted my participation within an understanding of Black feminist ethics. From the beginning, I took up Audre Lorde’s challenge to ‘seek the roots’ of our foremothers and set intentions to approach this work with love and attention to the many documented histories/stories entrusted to us.”

*Melaine Ferdinand-King*

N’Kosi Oates  
*Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Africana Studies*

Research interests: African American culture, aesthetics, literature, and social history from Reconstruction to the 1980s

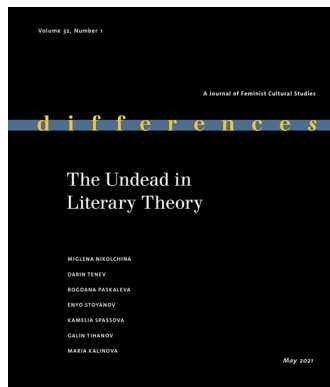


“Mary Murphy and Professor Ann duCille developed a remarkable, immersive experience. Teaching is a central focus of the Pembroke Center, and both Mary and Ann were intentional that the proctorship offered a chance for us to learn the curatorial process. My graduate proctor colleague and I corresponded via email with prospective donors, attended team meetings, and assisted with a survey visit. We had an opportunity to see what it means to be a curator/archivist.”

*N’Kosi Oates*

## differences Proctorships

*differences* is one of the foremost journals of feminist criticism in the Anglophone world, and graduate summer proctorships with the journal enable students to learn about all aspects of journal operations in a hands-on way. Proctors work closely with Editor and Senior Lecturer in Gender and Sexuality Studies Denise Davis as they manage submissions, communicate with a broad array of feminist scholars, and acquire scholarly publishing skills and experience. Journal proctorships also allow graduate students to involve themselves deeply in theoretical debates that are germane to their own scholarship. Through the process of putting together issues of *differences*, they discover new research and make new academic and professional relationships.



### Scott Jackshaw

*Ph.D. candidate in English at Brown*

Research interests: convening queer theory, critical theory, and political theology to analyze configurations of difference, subjectivity, and being in contemporary poetry, poetry as a way of performing theoretical inquiry



“I’ve had a terrific experience as an editorial assistant at *differences* over the last two months, and I’m grateful for this opportunity to immerse myself in feminist scholarship and to demystify the world of academic publishing.”

*Scott Jackshaw*

### Soomin Kim

*Ph.D. candidate in English at Brown*

Research interests: 19th century British novels and the element of suspense, reading effects, narrative time



“The proctorship allowed me to actively engage in new writings by scholars from various fields, and pushed me to think in both critical and editorial terms the best way these arguments could be presented. ...I formed new connections with scholars engaging in cutting-edge work across the country, and with my fellow scholars at the Pembroke Center. I learned the intricate works that go on behind the academic journal publishing scene, and am proud to have contributed towards upcoming issues of *differences*.”

*Suzy Kim*

## In Memoriam

### Chelsey C. Remington '61, P'89, '92

The Pembroke Center community lost a great friend in March when Chelsey C. Remington '61, P'89, '92 passed away at her home in Cape Neddick, Maine.



Chelsey, who earned her A.B. from Pembroke College in Brown University in 1961, joined IBM as a Systems Engineer and remained with the company until 1969. A lifelong community volunteer, particularly in the fields of education and community service, Chelsey served as chair of the Pembroke Associates Council from 1992-94.

Chelsey served in many positions of leadership, including as president of the Harvard Garden Club, president of the Harvard Historical Society, a governor of the Concord (Massachusetts) Museum and a trustee of Fruitlands Museums in Harvard for eleven years. She worked for over fifteen years with Concord (MA) Family Service, a family service agency that offered a broad range of family counseling services including older adult services, adoption, pregnancy counseling, and employee assistance services in an eleven-town area. Chelsey also served on the Ladies Committee of the Museum of Fine Arts (Boston), and helped lead fundraising efforts there. She was named an MFA Overseer in 1996 and was later appointed an Honorary Overseer.

Chelsey had a great impact at Brown. In addition to chairing the Pembroke Center Associates Council, she was appointed a trustee in 1999, and was the national chair of the Brown Annual Fund for three years. In addition, she was a long-time member of the University's Facilities and Design Committee.

Described as a doting grandmother and a lover of the Maine coast, with a self-taught but keen appreciation for landscape design, interior design, art and architecture, Chelsey is said to have loved to cook and garden. ■

*A memorial service will be held at Manning Chapel on the Brown campus on Friday, September 17 at 4:00 p.m.*



**BROWN**  
Pembroke Center

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

Visit the [Pembroke Center at Brown University](#)  
[YouTube playlist](#) to view recordings of our events.

CONNECT WITH US ON SOCIAL MEDIA!

@pembrokecenter\_brown    @PembrokeCenter    @PembrokeCenter

*differences*

@PembrokeCenter.BrownUniversity

# 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.

- My check is enclosed, payable to Brown University.
- Please charge my credit card:  
 Mastercard    Visa    American Express    Discover

NAME

CLASS/AFFILIATION

ADDRESS

CITY

STATE

ZIP

Appeal: Pembroke Center Publications

ACCOUNT NUMBER

EXPIRATION

SIGNATURE

Please return this form with payment to:  
*Friends of the Pembroke Center, Box 1877, Brown University,  
Providence, RI 02912*

You also may contribute to the Friends of the Pembroke Center via Brown University's secure web server, [gifts.brown.edu/pembroke](https://gifts.brown.edu/pembroke)

Questions? Please call Darcy Pinkerton at (401) 863-1162.