

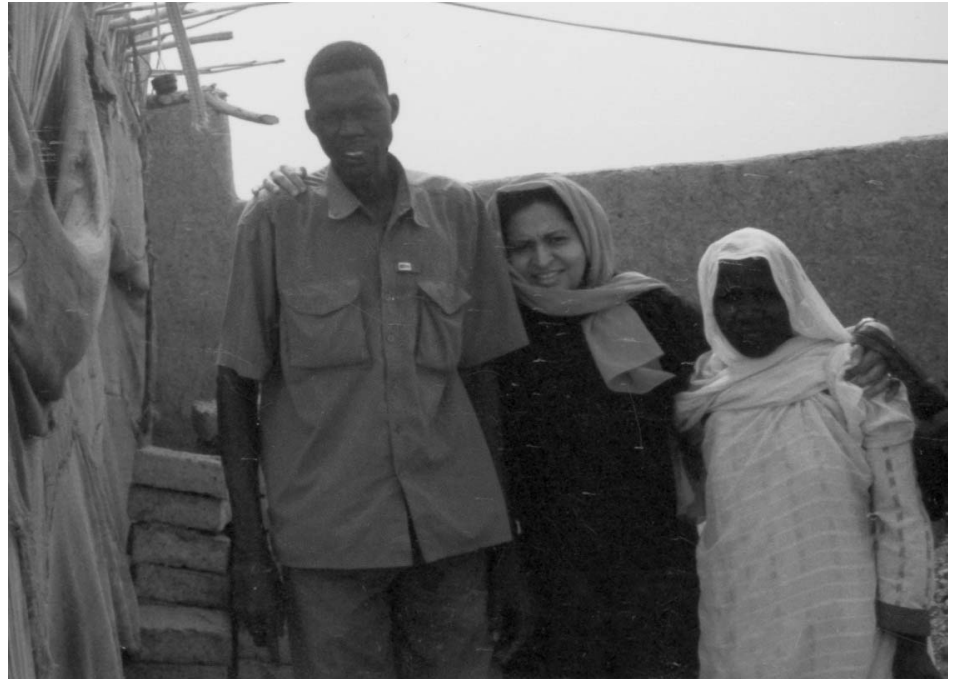


## Pembroke Center Launches New Research Initiative:

### Gender and the Politics of "Traditional" Muslim Practices

The Pembroke Center is pleased to announce a new research initiative led by the Center's Senior Research Associate, Rogaia Mustafa Abusharaf, and Dicle Kogacioglu, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at Sabanci University in Istanbul, Turkey.

The initiative starts with the premise that women are central to current international politics involving the Muslim world. The United States counts the liberation of women from the oppression of the Taliban as one of its achievements in the war in Afghanistan. Honor killings (the killing of a girl or woman for acts that are seen to sully family honor) are cited as one of the obstacles to Turkey's admission to the European Union. Transnational organizations mount efforts to eradicate female circumcision in Africa. France's anxiety about immigration and assimilation focuses on the banning of schoolgirls' headscarves. Gendered practices also play a role in internal politics. In Egypt, some women put on the veil as a form of



(L-R) A Dinka Chief, Rogaia Mustafa Abusharaf and a Southern Sudanese Woman in the Wad El Bashir camp for internally displaced persons in Sudan.

opposition to Egyptian President Hosny Mubarak. In parts of Afghanistan, women retain the burka in a concern for preserving local practices. In Sudan, women take up circumcision in the course of Islamization.

The research initiative explores how the woman question plays in these very different political examples. The most common understanding in western Europe and North America would see the role of women as directly indicative of a struggle between modernity and tradition, with modernization standing in for western values and interests. According to this view, these vastly different practices—the rich practice of veiling, the custom of

female circumcision, and the crime of honor killing—are seen to be on the same continuum. While this view is expedient for those wishing to portray a simple ideological picture, it neither adequately describes the realities of gendered Muslim practices, nor the full nature of western interests.

Issues that used to be the more or less exclusive concern of local governments and customary law have taken on new relevance as national and transnational politics become more and more entwined with the local and the national. For example, honor killings in Turkey can no longer be contained within national borders given

*Continued on page 2*

## From the Director

2006 marks the 25th anniversary of the Pembroke Center. This milestone presents us with an opportunity to reflect on our accomplishments and to consider the Center's future. You may have read in the last issue of this newsletter that the Center will be moving into Pembroke Hall after renovations are completed in 2008. As we think about moving into our new home, we have exciting plans for our research programs, for the undergraduate Gender Studies concentration, for *differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies*, for the Pembroke Center Associates, and for the Christine Dunlap Farnham Archives.

In order to strengthen the Pembroke Center programs and to secure their future, we must increase the Pembroke Center endowment, which provides the vital, dependable income that makes everything possible. There are many ways to contribute to the Center, including opportunities to create named endowments to support particular aspects of the Center's research and teaching activities. One of the most rewarding ways to secure the Center's future and to increase endowment support is through planned giving.

Gift planning opportunities are many and include gifts of securities, bequests, charitable lead trusts, pooled income funds, charitable remainder trusts and charitable gift annuities.

Many of these options provide donors with considerable tax and other benefits. But as importantly, planned gifts provide donors with a powerful tool to create a legacy that will support the Pembroke Center and Brown University for generations to come. Those who make a planned gift also become members of the University's College Hill Society, which includes an invitation to an annual recognition luncheon and educational seminar. For those who are already members of the College Hill Society, we thank you!

If you are interested in supporting the University and the Pembroke Center through a planned gift to the Pembroke Center endowment or creating a new named endowment, please contact the Brown University Office of Planned Giving by calling (401) 863-9119. They can help you consider the benefits of different types of gifts and help answer any questions you may have.

Thank you for your consideration and your part in our journey these past 25 years.



Elizabeth Weed  
Director

*Continued from page 1*

Turkey's candidacy for admission to the European Union (EU). The killing itself has one set of meanings at the local level in which it happens; another at the level of the state, which, while traditionally lenient toward such crimes, is keen on admittance into the EU; another at the level of the EU, which demands Turkey's eradication of honor killings but does not include them in its own agenda of global gender issues; and, another at the international level, where Turkey is represented either as admirably modern or unacceptably backward depending on the political forces at work.

The project explores how to better understand the ways gender is mobilized in politics and how the welfare of women is ultimately affected by the entanglement of these political registers. Within these broad questions, many others emerge, such as the relative roles of the markets, of local activism by women and others, the role of civil society, of the international media, of democratization, and so forth. To address such questions, the project takes a cross-cultural perspective and engages scholars from a range of disciplines.

## New to the Archives: The Papers of Katherine Littlefield, Class of 1902



Katherine Littlefield

A recent acquisition of the Pembroke Center Archives, the papers of Katherine Littlefield, Class of 1902, offer a treasure trove of social and cultural history and reflect a remarkable woman of forthright insight and candor. Donated by her niece, Pembroke Center Associates member Jean Edwards '45, the materials include charmingly full and detailed dance cards, invitations to balls, and a long, expressive letter Ms. Littlefield wrote to her classmates as an alumna representative to a reunion two years after her Pembroke graduation.

In her letter, Katherine Littlefield exhibits the dignified and direct qualities and style that her niece, Jean Edwards says made her both very much loved if also a little intimidating within the family. Ms. Littlefield's charge is to inform her classmates of the meeting of the "...Associated Alumnae, or whatever that society is to which Pembroke wishes to belong, but does not." She describes members of their class that attended:

*"Grace Gallup was here, looking very prosperous. I do like Grace. Her straight way of looking at things, her unsentimentality, her uncompromising honesty, her bluntness and great capability, appeal to me.... Edith May Goff, of the curls and the shawl, has done something to herself so that I barely knew her. Either she has found a skillful tailor, or is trying the rest-cure, for her angles are less apparent and she seems to have found the road to Happy Embonpoint less rough than I have."*

This last note is a delicate reference to the style of the day that favored plumpness and reveals the attitudes toward women's body images that have so changed from when health and beauty were associated with fullness rather than skinniness.

In a later passage, she says that she became a "confirmed disbeliever" in fraternities after talking with another Pembroke classmate who felt "conspicuous" in her non-membership. This egalitarian concern is reflected as well when Ms. Littlefield refers with pleasure to another classmate who she remembers "...as the waitress in Alice Ballou's family.... And now she has received the degree of Bachelor of Philosophy and since she graduated has advanced out of the horizon of the days when she used to give me cookies" and who looked prosperous and was doing well.

The bequest of Katherine Littlefield's papers reflects, according to Jane Lancaster, Consultant to the Christine

Dunlap Farnham Archives, "a fortuitous intersection" of the provenance of many gifts to the Archives. Jean Edwards was moving and in sorting through her family home, found the brown paper envelope filled with her aunt's papers that provide historically valuable and enormously interesting insight into life as a Pembroke graduate in the early 1900s.

### About the Christine Dunlap Farnham Archives

Housed in the John Hay Library at Brown University, the Christine Dunlap Farnham Archives focuses on twentieth-century Brown and Rhode Island women and their organizations. In addition to correspondence, diaries, photographs, newspapers, yearbooks, and memorabilia, it also includes a collection of oral history tapes and videos. The Archives has recently been expanded to include the Feminist Theory Papers, a collection of papers dedicated to the legacies of feminist thinkers active in the twentieth-century.

*Written by  
Leslie Newman, AB/MA '75, P'08  
Pembroke Associates  
Council Member*

For information about donating items to the Archives, please contact Jane Lancaster at [Jane\\_Lancaster@brown.edu](mailto:Jane_Lancaster@brown.edu) or by calling (401) 863-3433.



## Associates Sponsor Events in New York City and Providence



Foreground (l-r): Betsy West, '73 and Ann Cohen, '77

### “The (TV) Producers” Program Launches Lively Discussion

Hosted by Pembroke Associates Council member Ava Seave, '77 in her Manhattan home on February 8, 2006, “The (TV) Producers” drew about 50 Brown alumnae and alumni to hear Ann Cohen, '77 and Betsy West, '73 share their experiences working in the media.

Cohen is a comedy writer and producer who is currently a supervising producer of “The Best Week Ever,” a weekly satirical review of pop culture news on VH-1. West is an Emmy award

winning television executive with more than 25 years experience at CBS NEWS and ABC NEWS, where she was one of the original field producers at “Nightline” and went on to help launch “Primetime Live” and “Turning Point.”

Moderated by Seave, the discussion ranged from tips on how to break into the media business to current events in the media, such as the controversy surrounding the publication of cartoons offensive to many in the Muslim world.

### “Rhode Island Women: Past, Present and Future” Highlights the Christine Dunlap Farnham Archives

To mark Women’s History Month, the Pembroke Center Associates, the Sarah Doyle Women’s Center and the Friends of the Library hosted an event and exhibit showcasing documents and artifacts of Rhode Island and Pembroke women housed in the Christine Dunlap Farnham Archives. Held on March 2, 2006 at the John Hay Library, the event celebrated the importance of remembering and preserving women’s achievements. Featured speakers included:

- Jane Lancaster - an historian and Consultant to the Christine Dunlap Farnham Archives;
- Holly Snyder - an archivist and Scholarly Resources Librarian for the Brown University Library;
- Erica Trauba, '07 - a current Brown student assisting with the Archives;
- Rita Michealson, '50 - a Brown alumna who spoke about historical events of the 1960s; and,
- Jody Glass - a donor of records to the Archives.

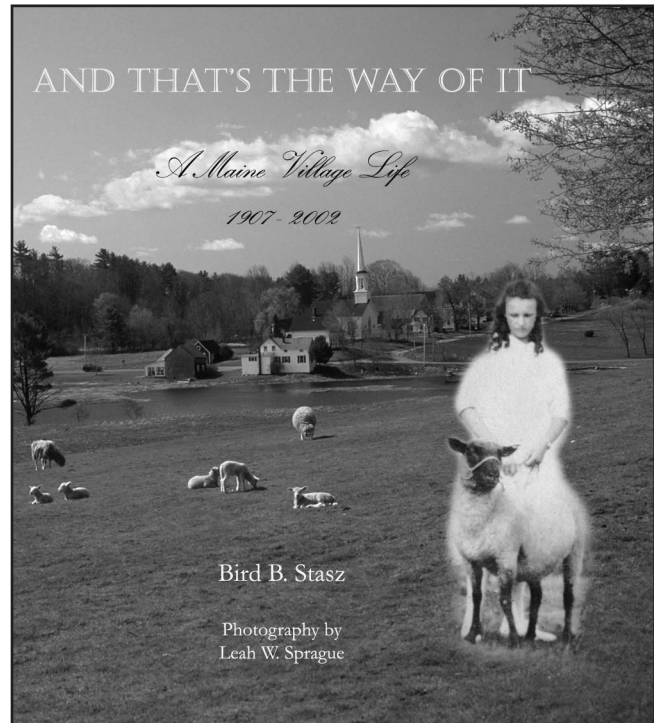
The Christine Dunlap Farnham Archives’ nationally significant holdings are strongest in the areas of:

- clubs and philanthropies;
- higher education;
- employment;
- women’s health;
- literary works and salons;
- reform movements;
- feminist theory; and,
- Rhode Island history.

For information about donating papers or other memorabilia to the Archives, please contact Jane Lancaster at [Jane\\_Lancaster@brown.edu](mailto:Jane_Lancaster@brown.edu) or by calling (401) 863-2643.

## Book Features Photography of Pembroke Associates Council Member Leah W. Sprague, '66

*And That's the Way of It: A Maine Village Life 1907 - 2002* by Bird B. Stasz P'07 tells the story of the village of Sheepscot, Maine, primarily through the reminiscences of longtime resident Dorothy Carney Chase. Sheepscot sits at the confluence of two rivers in Midcoast Maine. The journey begins in the 17th century, when Sheepscot was one of the first settlements in Maine; takes us into the 19th century, when Dorothy Carney Chase's great-grandparents moved from Boston to the thriving village; and through the 20th century, when Dorothy was born and raised in an environment that offered the challenges of farm life, a tolerance for the curious characters who made the village home, and the security for children to explore their own unique spirits. The book is illustrated by Leah W. Sprague, '66 with both historical and contemporary photographs.



Copies of the book are available from the Sheepscot Valley Conservation Association, which can be reached on the web at [www.sheepscot.org](http://www.sheepscot.org) or by phone at (207) 586-5616.

### Stay in Better Touch with the Pembroke Associates through Email

The Pembroke Associates send out periodic e-mails to our members to alert them of important Pembroke Center news and events.

This list is just for the Pembroke Center. Because we respect your privacy, we never share your contact information with other organizations. And, of course, you may unsubscribe at any time.

If you would like to begin receiving Pembroke Associates e-mails, please send an e-mail to [Christy\\_Law\\_Blanchard@brown.edu](mailto:Christy_Law_Blanchard@brown.edu) with your name and e-mail address so we can add you to our list! Thank you!

## Center Manager Elizabeth Barboza Wins Prestigious Brown Excellence Award for Service

Elizabeth Barboza has been the Pembroke Center Manager since the founding of the Center in 1981. This year, Brown University awarded her with the Brown Employee Appreciation and Recognition (BEAR) Excellence Award for Service. The awards are competitive and the University chose this year's recipients from a large pool of candidates.

The BEAR award committee recognized Barboza's myriad accomplishments for the Pembroke Center and the University. Pembroke Center Director Elizabeth Weed wrote in her nomination:



PHOTO CREDIT: BROWN UNIVERSITY | JOHN ABROMOWSKI

President Ruth Simmons presents Liz Barboza with the BEAR award.

*“For almost 25 years, Elizabeth Barboza, the manager of the Pembroke Center, has been crucial to the Center’s success, and has helped build it to what it is today: an internationally respected research center with many programs and a healthy endowment. Liz oversees the administrative details of a busy and multifaceted center with great skill and efficiency and maintains productive relationships with academic and administrative departments across the University. But why Liz and merits exceptional recognition is that she does all this with an extraordinary warmth, wit, and generosity that enhances everything the Center does. As many have remarked, she is the heart of the Pembroke Center.”*

*“The Center has housed 72 postdoctoral fellows, graduated 175 concentrators and worked with scores of faculty fellows, visiting scholars, and affiliated faculty. For Liz these are not numbers. Postdoctoral fellows who leave Brown after a year in residence at the Pembroke Center continue their relationships with Liz for years afterwards. Virtually everyone involved with the Pembroke Center experiences the Center at least in part through their relationship with Liz. When she retires at the end of this academic year, she will leave her incomparable personal touch as one of the Center’s richest legacies.”*

Barboza and other Brown staff receiving BEAR excellence awards were honored at a ceremony on January 20, 2006 in the Olney-Margolies Athletic Center. President Ruth Simmons presented the awards.

# **No More Tears Sister: Anatomy of Hope and Betrayal**



Sharika Thiranagama

Sharika Thiranagama, the Nancy L. Buc Postdoctoral Fellow at the Pembroke Center this academic year, has an especially personal connection to her research and work. Thiranagama's research examines the conflict in her native Sri Lanka and the displacement of Tamils and Muslims in the North of Sri Lanka. Specifically, she is exploring the shifting ways in which allegiance, betrayal, and community have been drawn and redrawn within the Sri Lankan Tamil community through the systematic identification and elimination of 'traitors' by the Tamil militant group the LTTE.

In addition to her academic research, she acts in a film about her mother, Dr. Rajani Thiranagama. *No More Tears Sister: Anatomy of Hope and Betrayal* is produced by the National Film Board of Canada and is written and directed by Helene Klodawsky. A story of love, revolution, and betrayal, *No More Tears Sister* explores the price of truth in times of war.

Set during the violent ethnic conflict that has enveloped Sri Lanka over decades, the documentary recreates the courageous and vibrant life of renowned human rights activist, Dr. Rajani Thiranagama. Mother, anatomy professor, and symbol of hope, Rajani was assassinated at the age of thirty-five. Stunningly photographed, using rare archival footage, intimate correspondence and poetic recreations, the story of Rajani and her family delves into rarely explored themes – revolutionary women and their dangerous pursuit of justice.

## **PEMBROKE CENTER ADVISORY BOARD**

---

### **REY CHOW**

*Comparative Literature and  
Modern Culture and Media*

### **CAROLYN J. DEAN**

*History*

### **MARY ANN DOANE**

*Modern Culture and  
Media and English*

### **ANNE FAUSTO-STERLING**

*Biology and Gender Studies*

### **DAVID KONSTAN**

*Classics*

## **EX OFFICIO**

---

### **NANCY ARMSTRONG**

*English and Comparative  
Literature and Modern Culture  
and Media  
(Nancy Duke Lewis Professor)*

### **KAREN NEWMAN**

*English and Comparative  
Literature (Pembroke Center  
Director 1987-1993)*

### **ELLEN ROONEY**

*Modern Culture and Media  
and English (Pembroke Center  
Director 1993-2000)*

## **PEMBROKE CENTER ASSOCIATES COUNCIL OFFICERS**

---

### **ANITA SPIVEY, '74**

*Chair*

### **DIANE LAKE NORTHROP, '54**

*Vice-Chair*

## **FACULTY & STAFF**

---

### **ELIZABETH WEED**

*Director*

### **ROGAIA ABUSHARAF**

*Senior Research Associate*

### **ELIZABETH BARBOZA**

*Center Manager*

### **DENISE DAVIS**

*Managing Editor, differences*

### **TAMAR KATZ**

*Director of Gender Studies*

### **JANE LANCASTER**

*Consultant, Farnham Archives*

### **CHRISTY LAW BLANCHARD**

*Director of Alumnae Affairs*



Pembroke Center  
for Teaching and Research on Women  
Brown University  
Box 1958  
Providence, RI 02912

Presort First Class  
US Postage  
**PAID**  
Permit No. 202  
Providence, RI

**Yes! I'd like join or renew my membership with the Pembroke Center Associates!**

- |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$5,000 + Sarah Doyle Society                         | <input type="checkbox"/> \$500 - \$999 Patron            | <input type="checkbox"/> \$75 - \$99 Contributing Member |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$2,500 - \$4,999 Anna Canada Swain Partners          | <input type="checkbox"/> \$250 - \$499 Sponsor           | <input type="checkbox"/> \$50 - \$74 Associate           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$1,000 - \$2,499 Elisha Benjamin Andrews Benefactors | <input type="checkbox"/> \$100 - \$249 Sustaining Member | <input type="checkbox"/> Other \$ _____                  |

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class/Affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

- My check is enclosed.    Please charge my credit card:    MasterCard    Visa    American Express

Account number: \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

- Please send me information about including the Pembroke Center in my will.  
 I would like information about donating my papers to the Christine Dunlap Farnham Archives.

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