

Pembroke Center Associates

Newsletter

Breaking Barriers in the Workplace



(L-R) : Rogeriee Thompson '73, Leah Sprague '66, Sharon B. Drager, M.D. '67, and Andrea I. Razzaghi '82

The Pembroke Center Associates' commencement forum, "Brown Women: Breaking Barriers in the Workplace," explored the experiences of women working in traditionally male dominated fields. Vascular surgeon Sharon B. Drager, M.D. '67, Assistant Director of the Planetary Science Division at NASA Andrea I. Razzaghi '82, and United States First Circuit Court of Appeals Justice Rogeriee Thompson '73 spoke about their experiences in breaking new ground in medicine, engineering, and the justice system.

Leah Sprague '66, a member of the Pembroke Center Associates Council and retired justice of the Massachusetts Trial Court, moderated. She recalled her desire to "follow the rules," but finding out there were other rules that she did not know about. She asked the panelists if they had ever experienced unwritten rules that influenced their opportunities for advancement.

"As a child growing up in the segregated South, we were confronted by all kinds of rules, both with respect to race and to gender. When I left the South, I did so during my last two years of high school. I moved from an all-black community to an all-white community in Scarsdale, New York," said Judge Rogeriee Thompson '73. "Even in a place like Scarsdale, my guidance counselor told me to make sure I took typing because, 'You need to be able to be a good secretary.' So, my suggestion to her was, 'Could you just please send my application to Pembroke and let me worry about what I'm going to do for the rest of my life?' So there are rules, and then there is finding out ways to break those rules."

Andrea Razzaghi had a very different experience. "I like to think back to when I was coming up, and I was given a gift that I didn't realize until recently. I was given a gift of not being told certain rules," said Razzaghi.

"I think back about my father. I was in third grade and I would come home and he had a bunch of power tools. I wanted to play with the power tools. I wanted to build things and make things. I had two older brothers and he never told me that girls don't play with power tools."

"I had another gift. I had a guidance counselor who was looking at my skills and interests when I was applying to college and said, 'You should think about engineering.' I didn't know any engineers at the time," remembered Razzaghi. "I appreciate that now, because I've certainly met women my age who knew they wanted to be engineers but were actively discouraged."

In responding to how things change, Dr. Sharon Drager suggested that getting more women into particular fields is very important. "I personally believe that critical mass is the answer," said Drager. "You have to have a critical mass of women in any field, and then things really do change. Certainly in medicine, in OB-GYN and pediatrics, where women are the majority now, attitudes have changed as far as maternity leave and some other things—but in surgery not so much."

Dr. Drager said she asked a very successful hospital CEO if she had any advice she wanted to share. "She said that she felt that having a mentor who helped her negotiate the unwritten rules has been very helpful to her," said Drager. The other panelists agreed that having a mentor is important and that women should not hesitate to recruit their own mentors.

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From the Director

The 2011-12 academic year has been a remarkable one for the Pembroke Center. We celebrated our 30th anniversary and sponsored Gloria Steinem's visit to campus; the University marked 120 years of women at Brown with the Women's Leadership Conference, and we received a national award.

In June, the Pembroke Center accepted the National Council for Research on Women's "Lifetime Achievement Award" for our thirty years of cutting-edge research that has had a lasting impact on Women's and Gender Studies. This national recognition reflects our long and continued engagement with scholars from around the world and our enduring impact on academic research in many fields. The faculty, students, and staff of the Pembroke Center were elated to receive this recognition of the Center's efforts to advance feminist and critical theory. It honors our deep commitment to supporting the next generation of scholars through our postdoctoral fellowships, graduate student seminar fellowships, and with our Gender and Sexuality Studies concentration for undergraduates. I'm particularly grateful to the directors who came before me – Joan Wallach Scott, Karen Newman, Ellen Rooney, and Elizabeth

Weed – whose inspired leadership played a vital role in building such a vibrant Center.

Looking forward, we are excited to launch our seed grant program for innovative research – made possible by the success of the Pembroke Challenge. We will be reaching out to faculty and launching a competitive process to award grant funding to support innovative transnational research at the Center that will involve faculty and students from the humanities, social sciences, creative arts, and life sciences.

As I reflect on all we have accomplished, I am struck by how fortunate we are to have the Pembroke Center Associates behind us. Your support – through your membership contributions, events like the commencement forum, student prizes and grants, and publications – strengthens and amplifies our work.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Kay B. Warren
Director

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Gloria Steinem Discusses Her Life's Work for Women and Social Change



Gloria Steinem and President Simmons on stage at Brown

In late April, the Pembroke Center was pleased to sponsor iconic feminist activist and author Gloria Steinem's visit to campus. Steinem came to Brown to screen the HBO documentary film *Gloria: In Her Own Words*. The film frames Steinem's life story with key quotes from her, and intersperses recent interviews with Steinem, archival footage, photographs, artifacts from the women's liberation movement, video of her critics, and excerpts from press interviews. It chronicles her political awakening, the founding of *Ms. Magazine*, her battle with breast cancer, the loss of her parents and husband, her most bruising public fights, and her hopes for the future of social change movements. The film was cheered with a rousing standing ovation from the approximately 600 people filling the Salomon Center for Teaching.

After the film, President Ruth Simmons and Gloria Steinem discussed a wide range of topics – from publicly baring painful moments of

one's life to enduring the backlash from one's activism. "The first stage of resistance is when people say, 'You're crazy. This movement goes against nature.' In the second stage people tell you it's all over, nothing else needs to be done," observed Steinem.

In response to questions from the audience, Steinem went on to discuss prospects for having a woman president of the United States and the freedom of people to dress and express themselves as they choose. She also shared her optimism for the women's movement and the many democracy movements around the world.

Before the main event, Steinem took time to meet with students from the Pembroke Center's Gender and Sexuality Studies concentration and students active with the Sarah Doyle Women's Center. Moderated by Amy Richards, author and co-founder of the Third Wave Foundation and Soapbox, Inc., Steinem graciously answered student ques-

tions on a wide range of subjects, from how to organize for change, to human trafficking, to her writing process.

Steinem shared her distrust of top-down movements for social change and advised that one must always ask the people who one is trying to help what would work best for them. She said that when she was a child and on a school field trip, she encountered a turtle stuck in the mud far from the river that must have been its home. Eager to help the turtle, Steinem picked it up and carried it all the way back to the river. Her teacher gently intervened and explained that it had probably taken the turtle a month to get to where she had found it and to lay its eggs. From then on, Steinem said, she always reminds herself to "ask the turtle" before taking action on someone else's behalf.

"The Pembroke Center was thrilled to sponsor Gloria Steinem's visit to Brown," said Kay Warren, director of the Pembroke Center. "This was an unparalleled opportunity for students and the larger Brown community to hear two inspiring women leaders engage in a conversation about setting the agenda for women's issues today, forging wider coalitions for justice, and the importance of responding to powerful critics."

Conference Celebrates the History of Brown Women



Johanna Fernández '93, Kisa Takesue '88, Ann Arthur, M.D. '85, Sheryl Brisset-Chapman '71, Denise Bledsoe Slaughter '75, AM'77, Bernice McLeod Bailey '68, P'99, P'03



(L-R): Diana Wells '88, Stephanie Robinson '87, AM'88, Joan Atherton '71, Deborah Rubin '75, P'09, Jasmine Waddell, Ph.D. '99

More than 550 alumnae returned to the campus May 4–5, 2012, to mark 120 years of women's education at Brown and honor President Ruth J. Simmons. The Women's Leadership Conference featured faculty lectures, discussions with Brown administrators, alumnae panels on topics of vital concern to women, an exhibit at the John Hay Library, and campus tours. Sponsored by the Women's Leadership Council and chaired by Women's Leadership Council Executive Committee Member and Pembroke Center Associates Council Member Mary Vascellaro '74, P'09, the conference included a number of programs organized by the Pembroke Center, including a talk by Pembroke Center Director Kay Warren about the "Violence and the Media" class she teaches.

Council member Bernice McLeod Bailey '68, P'99, P'03 organized a panel discussing women activists at Brown. Starting with the 1968 Black Student Walkout, alumnae from several decades shared their experiences working for institutional change at Brown and in larger social movements.

Council Member Jasmine Waddell PhD '99, who is serving as trustee on the Corporation of Brown University, led a panel exploring humanitarianism and identifying the barriers to eradicating inequality and poverty around the world. Panelists discussed how human rights–based approaches to humanitarian assistance can be transformative for socially excluded groups and women.

Pembroke Center Associates Council Chair Nancy L. Buc '65, Trustee Emerita, Corporation of Brown University, organized a panel on the history of Brown women. Featuring

alumnae from the 1940s to the 2000s, panelists reflected on Brown women's history as they lived it. The alumnae engaged in a wide-ranging discussion about cherished memories, scholarly endeavors, favorite professors, lasting friendships, and the currents of political change that were underway when they were students.

A highlight of the conference was Friday evening's gala, which included a dramatic reading, "120 Years of Women at Brown," directed and presented by current female students in the Brown University/Trinity Rep MFA Program. The



(L-R) Nancy L. Buc '65, LLD'94 hon., Jean Miller '49, Polly Welts Kaufman '51, P'83, Bernice McLeod Bailey '68, P'99, P'03, Leslie Newman '75, AM'75, P'08, P'12, Barbara Raab '81, Alexandra "Sasha" Miller '94, Dania Matos '03

night was made even more celebratory when Susan P. Friedman '77, P'08 announced a \$1 million challenge to establish the first ever Ruth J. Simmons Women's Leadership Scholarship.

At the gala, alumnae also honored the visionary leadership of President Ruth J. Simmons with the Pembroke Center's Leadership for Change through Education Award. Established in 2006, this award pays tribute to women who succeed in changing lives by helping others to see the world differently and by offering new ways of thinking about seemingly insolvable problems. Pembroke Center Associates Council Member Robin A. Lenhardt '89, who serves as a fellow on the Corporation of Brown University, presented the award. "It was by no means pre-ordained that we would be here this evening. Surely our founders did not, nor did the slaves who labored to build University Hall, nor the early students of Pembroke, imagine that we would one day have a woman – let alone a Black one – at our helm," observed Lenhardt.

"Ruth Simmons's has committed herself to a path of innovative and transformative leadership. She has launched and presided over what, by any measure, has been one of the most successful periods in Brown's history," said Lenhardt. She went on to cite some of Simmons' most notable accomplishments at Brown, including conceiving and implementing the Plan for Academic Enrichment and launching a campaign that raised \$1.6 billion and allowed Brown to hire more faculty, establish new research centers, implement need-blind admissions, and greatly expand financial aid. "Together these accomplishments make educational opportunity here at Brown a reality."

"Ruth Simmons's example reminds us that education is indeed the great

equalizer, the balance wheel of our social machinery. In short, Ruth Simmons has helped us to become our best selves here at Brown University," observed Lenhardt. "We are more international and globally oriented, more diverse and open to students of all backgrounds – whether they be the child of a president or of a sharecropper or domestic worker. We are even more committed to the twin aims of research and teaching on our campus. We are also better situated to deal with the difficult issues of our time here at Brown, as the important work completed by the Committee on Slavery and Social Justice that Ruth commissioned makes clear."

"Ruth J. Simmons, for your long record of service and public sacrifice for Brown, for being a rock star president who inspires flash mobs and spontaneous dancing among students, for mentoring women administrators and students, for your authentic and transformative leadership, for your role as a change agent and barometer of justice on this campus and beyond, and for your courage in urging us to face our past so that we might have a brighter future, I am proud to present you with the 2012 Leadership for Change through Education Award."

Upon accepting the award, President Simmons remarked that the evening was a very special one. "I grew up in an era, in the South, when women and Blacks were expected to stay in their place, in every sense of the word. I grew up in a time when it was impossible for friendships across barriers to exist," said Simmons. "When I look out at this audience, I think of the wonderful time I've had at Brown, and see the friendships I've been able to forge and the extraordinary work that we have done together."

"I thank you so much for being here. I thank you for supporting this great institution. I thank you for everything you have done for me, the way you have inspired me, the way you have had my back, as they say. That's been very important because, let's talk. We like to think we are beyond a lot of the things that I just described, but, not yet, not completely," she added.

"My beginnings here were fantastic, perhaps auspicious, but it is fair to say that there are those among us who think that women should stay in their place, as they define it. We've even heard that very recently, upon the announcement that a second woman would become president of Brown," said Simmons. "So it is very much the case that we are not yet in a position to relax. We have to remain strong; we have to continue to support each other. We have to do good work and insist on the high ground in whatever we do."



Robin A. Lenhardt '89 presents President Simmons with the Pembroke Center's Leadership Award

Natalia Fadul '12 Awarded the Ruth Simmons Prize



Natalia Fadul '12

Established by President Simmons in 2008, this Pembroke Center prize recognizes an outstanding

honors thesis related to women or gender. Natalia Fadul, a Comparative Literature concentrator, has received the honor this year.

Fadul's thesis, titled "The Female Mind and the Absent Body: Writing Female Subjectivity," is a literary investigation into how women think about their bodies. To do this, she examines the writing of female subjectivity in Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925), María Luisa Bombal's *La Amortajada* (1938), and Natalia Ginzburg's *Lessico Familiare* (1963), from England, Chile, and Italy, respectively. Her thesis examines how each of these writers shapes and incorporates an absent body as she writes the mind and how these texts enact forms of resistance to defining the body according to societal norms.

Drawing from theories of gender performativity, the male gaze, and female autobiography, she looks in particular at the importance of self-definition of the body for the protagonists in each of these texts. Fadul explores how a less rigid or imposed bodily experience can reduce the alienation experienced by many women who think of their bodies as external objects.

This summer Fadul plans to pursue an internship at Norton Publishing Company in New York. In a few years she hopes to return to school to pursue a graduate degree in comparative literature or education. She also hopes to bridge the work begun in her thesis by bringing themes of gender studies and feminist theory to youth development.

Kathryn Davis '12 Receives Joan Wallach Scott Prize



Kathryn Davis '12

Named for Joan Wallach Scott, the founding director of the Pembroke Center and the Harold F. Linder Professor of Social Science

at the Institute for Advanced Study, this prize honors an outstanding thesis in Gender and Sexuality Studies. The Pembroke Center selected Kathryn Davis to receive the prize. Her honors thesis, "Seeing Queerly, Selling Queerly: Reconceptualizing LGBTQ-Targeted Television Advertising and Audience Reception," explores the sociocultural factors that have led to the growth of niche marketing on television to the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) community, and the response of this community to such advertising.

Davis explores the history of LGBTQ niche advertising and the debates about the political implications of this marketing. She examines the distinction between explicitly gay-targeting advertisements with

"gay vague" advertisements that are intended to appeal to this community in a coded manner that will not be understood by straight consumers. Davis also analyzes the processes of ad reception and the political potential of advertising. She posits that while there is limited potential for oppositional politics through niche marketing, in closely examining patterns of audience reception, there is considerable opportunity to understand the political positions occupied by the LGBTQ individuals in niche marketing and assimilation debates.

Davis plans to move to San Francisco this summer. She hopes to attend graduate school and pursue a career in the mental health field.

Barbara Anton Internship Grant Recipient Researches How to Improve the Lives of Ugandan Schoolchildren



Chishio Furukawa '13

Supporting honors research related to women and children and involving an internship or volunteer work with a community agency, the Pembroke Center awarded the 2011-12 Barbara Anton Internship Grant to Applied Math-Economics and Environmental Stud-

ies concentrator Chishio Furukawa '13. The \$1,000 grant supported Furukawa's research for his honors thesis, "Can Solar Lamps Replace Kerosene Candles and Improve Health, Education, and Safety in Non-Electrified Households? Randomized Evaluations in Rural Uganda."

Furukawa's research conducted a randomized controlled trial on the efficacy of solar lamps as an alternative to kerosene candles in rural Uganda. Simple wick kerosene candles emit air pollution – on an order of magnitude higher than the World Health Organization standard – and are ineffective light sources. Furukawa posited that replacing these candles with solar-charged LED lamps would likely lead to the improved health and educational outcomes for students. Furukawa selected 155 upper primary students for his study and randomly distributed solar desk lamps supplied by Barefoot Power Uganda to half of

the subjects. Furukawa conducted econometric analyses of household surveys and learning assessment surveys. His research revealed that solar lamps can provide modest improvement in air quality-related health by reducing indoor air pollution as well as significantly increasing the fire safety of the households. However, his results also suggest that solar lamps might have hindered children's study, likely due to the flickering of light when the lamps were not charged properly. Overall, his research suggests that, although solar lamps have the potential to improve the lives of over one billion people who lack electricity, the efficacy of the lamps and their adoption are major challenges.

Furukawa will complete his studies next year at Brown and graduate in 2013. He plans to attend graduate school to study development and environmental economics.

Ann Crawford-Roberts'12 and Emily Mephram'12 Share Helen Terry MacLeod Research Grant



Emily Mephram '12

Ann Crawford-Roberts '12

The Pembroke Center awarded \$1000 Helen Terry MacLeod research grants to Anthropology and International Relations concentrator Ann Crawford-Roberts'12 and Gender and Sexuality Studies concentrator Emily Mephram. The grants honor the life of Helen Terry MacLeod (1901-1994) who did not herself have a college education but who helped support the undergraduate, graduate, and professional school educations of her grandchildren, including Joan MacLeod Heminway '83.

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Crawford-Roberts's thesis, "Yes, She Is Stigmatizing Me': The Changing Landscape of Stigma in Botswana's HIV/AIDS Epidemic," investigates the presence, origins, and manifestations of stigma, paying attention to the history and structural features of stigma. It explores the sociocultural effects of the introduction and up-scale of antiretroviral AIDS treatment in Botswana, the country with the second highest HIV infection rate in the world and a nation looked to as a model in the global health response to HIV/AIDS. Crawford-Roberts explores the ways in which women and children become associated with HIV and the gendered roots and expressions of stigma. She conducted eight weeks of ethnographic fieldwork

and a critical overview of the scholarly literature. Her thesis seeks to explain the relationship between disease and stigma, as well as the impact of an epidemiologically successful public health intervention on the social lives of those treated.

Mepham's thesis, "Working Mothers: An Exploration of Sleep, Mood, and Work in the Perinatal Period," examines the intersection of work and motherhood in the period just after childbirth. Her study follows Rhode Island women from the third trimester of pregnancy to sixteen weeks postpartum, looking principally at measures of mood and sleep to examine challenges and conflicts in the period. Mepham collected her data using interviews and question-

naires at four time intervals. The project was designed to be holistic in its scope, involving analysis of women's roles in recent labor history and the sociocultural context that surrounds motherhood and work. Mepham's thesis seeks to create an exploration of the perinatal period, with emphasis on challenges, conflicts, and barriers that women face, including identification of certain at-risk groups.

Crawford-Roberts is taking a year off and next August will matriculate in a program at Mt. Sinai Medical School in New York for students who have studied social sciences and humanities but still hope to become doctors. Emily Mepham will be working as a Peace Corps volunteer on a health project in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Two Graduate Students Receive Marie J. Langlois Dissertation Prize



Daphna Oren-Magidor, AM'07, PhD'12

The Pembroke Center annually awards the Marie J. Langlois Dissertation Prize for an outstanding dissertation in the area of feminist studies. This year, in response to the high caliber of the nominations, the selection committee awarded the prize to two students.

Daphna Oren-Magidor, a graduate student in History, received one of the prizes for her dissertation, "Make Me a Fruitful Vine': Dealing with Infertility in Early Modern England," in which she explores the experience of infertility in England

in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Oren-Magidor discusses this topic not only from a medical perspective but also from its cultural, gendered, and emotional dimensions. She examines how infertile couples understood their condition, gave meaning to it, and ultimately sought to treat it. Her dissertation uses infertility as a lens through which to explore the interactions between medicine and culture in this period. Oren-Magidor has been awarded a two-year appointment as the George L. Mosse Postdoctoral Fellowship in the History of Gender and Sexuality at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

Pooja Rangan, a graduate student in Modern Culture and Media, also received the prize for her dissertation, "Automatic Ethnography: Otherness, Indexicality, and Humanitarian Visual Media." She examines contemporary humanitarian initiatives where visual media are provided to dehumanized subjects (indigenous natives, children, animals, refugees) as a means of immediate self-empowerment. Frequently,



Pooja Rangan, AM'08, PhD'12

the ethical imperative of immediate crisis-resolution requires the subjects of such projects to authenticate their otherness by drawing on the rhetorical tropes of directness, transparency, or indexicality. To challenge the ethnocentric connotations of these tropes of immediacy, she proposes focusing on the discursive and medial frames of "urgent" humanitarian intervention. Rangan is currently Assistant Professor of Culture and Media in the Eugene Lang College at the New School and is in the process of adapting her dissertation for publication as a book.