



Pembroke Associates Honor Marian Wright Edelman and Sister Mary Reilly

PHOTO CREDIT: HANK RANDALL



(L-R) Joan Wallach Scott, Sister Mary Reilly, Marian Wright Edelman, President Ruth Simmons, and Elizabeth Weed

In its inaugural “Leadership for Change through Education” Award program, the Pembroke Center Associates honored two outstanding women who have succeeded in changing lives by helping others to see the world differently. Marian Wright Edelman, President and Founder of the Washington D.C. based Children’s Defense Fund, and Sister Mary Reilly, Founder of Dorcas Place and Sophia Academy in Providence, accepted the award on April 11th at a luncheon ceremony.

“The Pembroke Center was established twenty-five years ago this month. It seems hard to believe, but it’s true,” said Elizabeth Weed, Director of the Pembroke Center. “I can’t think of a more exciting way to begin the celebration of that anniversary than the inauguration of this award.”

Joan Wallach Scott, the Harold F. Linder Professor at the Institute for Advanced Study’s School of Social Science and founding director of the Pembroke Center, delivered remarks on the importance of social justice and education.

She lauded Marian Wright Edelman’s national advocacy on behalf of the needs of children, encouraging “preventive investment” and a strategy of opposing legislation that harms children and supporting legislation that helps them. Scott noted that as Marian Wright Edelman works successfully on behalf of children at the macro level, Sister Mary Reilly works on the micro level, putting into practice the “preventive investment” that saves children’s physical and intellectual lives. She added that Sophia Academy is “demonstrating the validity of [a] belief in a small experiment that will have huge resonance—in the lives of its students who, we hope, will go on to multiply its effects, and on the state and even national level as proof that small classes and attention to many aspects of the lives of students and their families pays off.”

Scott remarked that it was fitting that these women were being honored at Brown University, “currently headed by a woman who herself is finding ways to implement social justice, indeed to demonstrate to the world of higher education how the needs of the very poorest of undergraduates can be met through scholarships.” Scott praised the Sidney E. Frank Endowed Scholarship Fund—a program that provides full financial assistance to undergraduates whose annual family income is lower than \$30,000. Scott noted that the program bears the mark of President Simmons’ ingenuity, just as did the “welcome she extended to Dillard University faculty and students after Hurricane Katrina, and the effort she made shortly after she assumed the presidency to address the legacy of slavery that had long haunted Brown’s history.”

From the Director

One of the most gratifying things about being at the Pembroke Center is the opportunity to work with new scholars every year. With each new Pembroke Seminar, we offer postdoctoral fellowships to promising young academics whose research interests align with the seminar's topic. When the year concludes, it is wonderful to know that the postdoctoral fellows' time at the Pembroke Center helped them to advance their careers.

This past academic year's seminar was "The Language of Victimization." Led by Carolyn Dean, Professor of History and Associate Dean of Faculty, the seminar explored the ways victimhood is understood and portrayed worldwide, and how those modes of understanding shape cultural responses and state policies. Those in this year's seminar benefited enormously from the contributions of our postdoctoral fellows.

Lori Allen, the Carol G. Lederer Postdoctoral Fellow, worked on Palestinian nationalism and human rights while in the Pembroke Seminar. Lori will move on to Harvard University to be an Academy Scholar at the Harvard Academy for International and Area Studies from 2006 - 2008.

Sharika Thiranagama was the Nancy L. Buc Postdoctoral Fellow this year. A native of Sri Lanka, Sharika researched the civil war in her home country and the displacement of Tamils in the north of Sri Lanka. Sharika is now off to begin an Economic and

Social Research Council of Great Britain and Northern Ireland postdoctoral fellowship in the Department of Anthropology of the School of Social and Political Sciences at the University of Edinburgh.

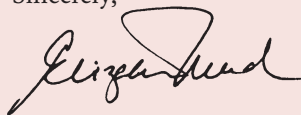
Donna Trembinski, the Artemis A.W. and Martha Joukowsky Postdoctoral Fellow, worked on modern perspectives of the suffering of medieval Christian saints. Donna is returning to Canada and will begin a postdoctoral position at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario. She will continue her research and teach a medieval survey course and a class on the medieval body.

We wish Lori, Sharika and Donna the best of luck in their careers and know they will make important contributions to scholarly research in their fields.

The Pembroke Center Associates should take pride in the fact that your contributions have helped bring these outstanding scholars to the Pembroke Center and that they, in turn, will enrich academic research and teaching nationally and internationally.

We are grateful for your steadfast support.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth Weed, PhD'73
Director

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"It's also fitting that the event is taking place at the Pembroke Center, a place which for twenty-five years now has been investigating the ways in which notions of difference—sexual, racial, class, ethnic, religious—have been used to organize relations in society—relations which are often unequal and so, unjust," added Scott. "The scholarly work produced at the Pembroke Center has shown that when inequality is attributed to natural difference, social injustice is taken to be a natural—hence incontestable—fact; when, however, inequality is understood as a set of choices made about how to organize society, social injustice is seen for what it is—something unfair, in need of—indeed susceptible to—correction."

"We established this award," said Anita Spivey, '74, P'09, and Chair of the Pembroke Center Associates, "to recognize that at the core of the

Pembroke Center's mission is its belief in the necessity and power of education.

"Marian Wright Edelman and Sister Mary Reilly have helped bring about change by offering new ways of thinking about education that has benefited countless children," said Mary Vascellaro '74, P'07, a past chair of the Pembroke Center Associates Council and current chair of the award committee.

"This is wonderful! And I'm delighted to be here with this great Sister," said Marian Wright Edelman. "I always go around quoting Eleanor Roosevelt and she always stated that it was powerful women, only powerful women, who would use power on behalf of powerless women and children. I think we are in the business of trying to create a movement of powerful women for powerless women and children today to try to transform the misguided priorities of this world."

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“Will someone please pinch me?” asked Sister Mary Reilly with a beaming smile. “When the notice came that I was going to be honored, and I found out with whom I was going to be honored, I have to tell you, I could not believe it! This is the guru!” she exclaimed about Marian Wright Edelman. “One woman said to me (a woman who had a profound influence on my life when I got back from Central America after being there for six years, she taught me how to integrate my experience and how to do critical and social analysis and so forth): ‘You educate for domestication or liberation: you choose the way.’ And you know what I chose.”

Each award was accompanied by a \$5,000 donation to an organization of the recipient’s choice. Marian Wright Edelman directed her award to the Children’s Defense Fund and Sister Mary Reilly designated hers for Sophia Academy.

To read the full text of Joan Wallach Scott’s remarks, please visit the Pembroke Center website at www.pembrokecenter.org.

Bon Voyage to Retiring Center Manager Liz Barboza!

Upon learning that Liz Barboza would be retiring after 25 years of service to the Pembroke Center, her colleagues, friends and family showed up in force to wish her well at a party held in her honor on May 19th.

“When Liz told us that she hoped to travel after retirement, I knew exactly what we had to do,” said Elizabeth Weed, Director of the Pembroke Center. “Liz has many, many fans, and we collected a travel fund to start Liz on her journey.” Even the food had a travel motif, as specialties from France, Scotland, the Middle East, Portugal and Italy were on the buffet. Each specialty was graced by a travel book from the region for Liz to enjoy.

“Liz has been an extraordinary force behind the growth and success of the Pembroke Center,” said Weed. “She’s been with us from the beginning and she’ll be greatly missed.”

Commencement Forum Explores Abstinence-Only Sex Education



Forum Panelists Nancy Northup '81 and Prof. Cynthia Garcia Coll P'06

Sponsored by the Pembroke Center Associates, the Commencement Forum drew an animated crowd to List Auditorium to discuss the question of abstinence-only sex education and whether it constitutes sex discrimination. “Abstinence-only” education now reaches millions of children and adolescents each year thanks to dramatically increased federal funding. Public debate on this issue usually focuses on moral concerns, on the impact such programs have on sexual behavior, and on the public health consequences of withholding information that could reduce rates of teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases. Less discussed is gender stereotyping. Do abstinence-only programs instill fixed and programmatic ideas about what it means to be male and female?

Panelists Nancy Northup, '81, President, Center for Reproductive Rights, and Cynthia Garcia Coll, P'06, Robinson and Barstow Professor of Education, Psychology and Pediatrics, led an engaging discussion about the impact abstinence-only education might have not only on boys' and girls' attitudes toward their sexual behavior, but also on their understanding of themselves as people and on their future roles in society.

Ellen Chesler, P'02 Co-Edits New Book: *Where Human Rights Begin: Health, Sexuality, and Women in the New Millennium*

Where Human Rights Begin is a timely collection of essays that explores the impact of women's rights and reproductive health policies around the globe. Written by distinguished scholars and policymakers, the essays provide eight country case studies assessing the impact of international treaties agreed upon at historic United Nations meetings during the 1990s, where improvements in women's status through education and health care were identified as central to larger goals for ending poverty, building democracy, and achieving human security, especially in the developing world.

The book is co-edited by Wendy Chavkin, a professor of clinical public health and obstetrics/gynecology at the Mailman School of Public Health at Columbia University, and Ellen Chesler, P'02, who administered the fellowship program that supported the book while serving as a senior fellow at the Open Society Institute in New York City. Ellen Chesler has been a dedicated friend to the Pembroke Center, having served on the Pembroke Associates Council. With her husband, Matt Mallow, '64, P'02, she established the Chesler-Mallow Senior Faculty Research Fellowship, which provides support for the faculty leadership of the Pembroke Seminar.



The University of Tennessee Honors Joan MacLeod Heminway '83 with Chancellor's Excellence in Teaching Award



Every year, the Chancellor of The University of Tennessee recognizes individuals who have made extraordinary contributions to the lives of

students at The University of Tennessee. This year, the Chancellor honored Joan MacLeod Heminway '83, who has been Associate Professor of Law at The University of Tennessee since 2000, by presenting her with his award for excellence in teaching. Heminway was among three tenured professors from the University's Knoxville campus who were presented this coveted award at the Chancellor's Honors Banquet in April. Heminway has been a member of the Pembroke Center Associates Council since 1993 and served as Chair from 1998 - 2000.

University officials praised her effective communication in the classroom. Her nominators not only acknowledged her gift for teaching and superb scholarship (for which she earlier had garnered honors from the College of Law), but also her dedicated service in organizing the College of Law's *pro bono* Animal Law Project, a student group that assists the local Knoxville community in dealing with legal issues involving "nonhuman animals." "Getting the award was such a special moment," said Heminway.

Brown Student Praises Gender Studies as a Valuable Academic Discipline

The Pembroke Center houses the Gender Studies concentration at Brown. The following excerpt is from a column written by Courtney Jenkins '07 and printed in The Brown Daily Herald on February 15, 2006. Reprinted by permission.

What kinds of people would you initially assume take a course called "Advanced Feminist Theory?" To some it might be a stereotypical vision of the combat-booted, flannel-suited "feminazi" sitting around a table with other women plotting the demise of man. To others it might be an equally caricatured figure—an activist, a tree-hugger or a radical liberal.

However you slice it, it's an unfair and unfounded image of a completely legitimate discipline continuously perpetuated by these negative conceptions of feminism and gender studies in American academia. And with the political climate increasingly pushing women back into the private sphere while eclipsing their public rights, it should only make sense that a field like gender studies would be considered paramount to understanding and interpreting current events. But why isn't it? Why don't we consider taking an intro to Gender Studies as integral to a well-rounded education just as we would a class on international relations?

Either we're too scared of showing up or too ignorant to even think about these issues. I'm here to convince you otherwise.

In fact, just thinking about it, a little under a year ago our campus was abuzz over the production of "The Vagina Monologues." Students lined up in droves to see it—artists, athletes, musicians, activists and scientists. The crowds were diverse in interest, in background and in thought processes. Whether they hated it or loved it, somehow everyone had something to say on issues of genital mutilation, orgasms, domestic abuse and abortion. No one probably asks your average economics major what he thinks of sex trafficking on a day-to-day basis, but it's about time someone did.

This is where gender studies classes come in. Far more than just an open forum for whining about the plight of females, I can honestly say that I've witnessed some of the most eye-opening, thought-provoking discussions on campus in these classes. We don't just read a Simone de Beauvoir text; we unpack, analyze and internalize it using our knowledge from other classes—one day I counted references to biology, history, philosophy, computer science and ethics in just 50 minutes—to produce an empowering web of knowledge and theory.

So when I walked out of the Smith Buonanno classroom doors last spring after each and every feminist theory discussion, I wasn't just set with a page of notes on game theory or the 1848 revolutions. Rather, I felt like my Brown education had come full circle. I was synthesizing two years of college level thinking into this class, applying theory from all walks of academia into my comments during discussion and bringing what others had said on topics ranging from pornography to women in science into my life.

But at the same time, I'm not satisfied with these amazing classes consisting of a small group of passionate intellectuals who, on the whole, are just like me. We're all pretty liberal, we're all pro-choice, and we're predominantly women. It's not surprising that some days I felt like we were just preaching to the choir, never really impacting anyone beyond ourselves.

And that's where you come in. In order to make these classes true forums for intellectual debate and growth, and to eventually dispel the aforementioned pejorative connotations of gender studies itself, there has to be more diversity of thought and background within these courses at Brown. So go ahead and shop around; you might be surprised by what you find inside.

The Advanced Feminist Theory class referenced above was taught by Gail Cohee, Director of the Sarah Doyle Women's Center.

Ruth Lubrano '23: Pioneer with the Rhode Island Birth Control League

In talking with Ruth Lubrano last year, Jane Lancaster AM '93, PhD '98, Consultant to the Christine Dunlap Farnham Archives, had concentrated on her memories of being a Pembroke student in the early 1920s. Ruth Lubrano is 104 years old, and one of the few surviving members of the Class of '23. A native of Cranston, she attended Cranston High School and met her husband Jack, who died at 102, after seventy-six years of marriage. Mrs. Lubrano was active locally beginning in her young adulthood, in her church, as president of the Auburn Library Association in Cranston, and in the Pembroke Club. The last time she was interviewed, she mentioned that she had been a medical social worker for the Rhode Island Birth Control League, the forerunner of Planned Parenthood of Rhode Island. Lancaster returned to talk to her more about her professional life.

I never went looking for a job. When I graduated from Pembroke in 1923 they came and asked me if I would like to be a social worker at Howard—the state hospital for mental diseases. I said I knew nothing about it, and they said the doctors would train me. I had three months training for something that should have taken years. My job had more to do with taking the patients who were going to the doctor, or visiting their homes, and sizing up what could be done to relieve the stress on their families.

At Howard, where the state institutions were, there was the Infirmary, the Institution for Bad Girls (she smiled), the Prison—that's still there, and the Poor House. I'll never forget my first night there. Boy, was I scared! My salary was \$90 per month and maintenance; I lived in the hospital. My rooms were close to patients who were apt to be screaming in the middle of the night. I soon got adjusted—had to. I was there from 1923-25, and resigned to get married. I didn't have to resign; I just wanted to start a home. At that time, schoolteachers in the whole state were not allowed to marry. Isn't that strange?



Ruth Lubrano '23 at her home in Providence

My next job happened when the Rhode Island Birth Control League came to me. I had a child—he was eight years old, I think. They wanted me to take over as Director. I said I would work part-time and sure enough they found a girl in the same situation—she had graduated from Pembroke and wanted to do part-time. I worked 2 ½ days; she did 2 ½. I did that for twenty years.

I was a medical social worker. It was not an accepted position. We had a miserable office on North Main Street. The patients came to us. The Catholic Church was very, very strong in its doctrine that any kind of contraception was wrong, so to be working to guide someone trying to protect herself while maintaining a relationship with her husband was very hush-hush. There were changes in twenty years, but it was all very gradual.

It was difficult for those ladies. I remember I had to have a police whistle with me when I traveled. They saw doctors, all specialists in ob/gyn. I don't recall any female doctors. They also saw trained nurses. We charged according to their means, for supplies, a minimum fee for the examination and advice. Mostly it was the diaphragm. That's what they needed the doctor for.

By the time I retired in '58 it was beginning to be more open and they hired an educational director who would go out and talk to organizations about our services, like premarital counseling. So in my later years I did premarital counseling.

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When Lancaster asked her about the difficulties of talking about sex, and whether her clients were embarrassed, Mrs. Lubrano laughed and leaned forward in her chair.

You just didn't talk about things like that. Not like now, people say anything. If they were desperate enough to come in, talking to a woman willing to listen made a difference. A sympathetic ear for a few minutes—the embarrassment broke down. Otherwise it wouldn't have been such a pleasant job. You'd see someone with anxiety in her face go out with a smile. It gave you a feeling of well-being—even if it was against the law. I know some board members were arrested. They were great women. There were also a handful of men.

According to Mrs. Lubrano, her husband, who taught high school physics and later took care of the Physics Lab at Brown, in retirement “fooled around with the things he enjoyed: he lectured on astronomy at Hamilton House, he taught chess at Wheeler.” She, on the other hand “was lost for a while” after she retired, but then started enjoying life with her friends, her Pembroke Club reading groups, and at their family house on the water in Wakefield.

*Article written by
Leslie Newman '75, AM'75, P'08.*

The Christine Dunlap Farnham Archives Honor the Legacy of an Extraordinary Pembroke College Alumna

Christine Dunlap Farnham graduated from Pembroke College in 1948 with a degree in English and American Literature and remained devoted to Pembroke and Brown. She cared deeply about advancing opportunities for women, became the first chair of the Pembroke Associates Council, and remained so until her tragic death in an automobile accident in 1984.

Farnham served as an alumna trustee on the Corporation of Brown University from 1976 - 1981 and received a Brown Bear Award for service to Brown. Farnham had taken particular care to keep alive the legacy of Pembroke College and was very interested in the achievements of women. She worked tirelessly to raise funds for the Pembroke Center and to establish an archives of Brown and Rhode Island women.

The Pembroke Center established the Christine Dunlap Farnham Archives to honor her achievements. The collection, housed at the John Hay Library, has expanded Brown's material about Brown and Rhode Island women and has catalogued related documents already in the University's Archives. The Pembroke Center published Karen Lamoree's *Research Guide to the Christine Dunlap Farnham Archives* in 1989. The Feminist Theory Papers collection, begun in 2002, preserves the legacies of more recent feminist thinkers. The papers of renowned feminist scholars Naomi Schor and Elaine Marks inaugurated the collection.

*For information about donating items to the Archives,
please contact Jane Lancaster at Jane_Lancaster@brown.edu or call (401) 863-3433.*

To Contact the Pembroke Center

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