

the pembroke center

for teaching and research on women

NEWSLETTER

FALL 1999

The Question of Emotion

2000–2001 Pembroke Center Research Topic

In 2000–01, the Pembroke Seminar will explore the question of emotion and its cognates: feeling, affect, sensibility, passion, mood, sentiment. We will examine the ways emotion is figured before and after the Enlightenment, inside and outside the West, in philosophical texts and in popular culture, in the disciplines and in the public sphere. Research projects may look at histories of affect and their genealogical formations, at the histories of individual emotions, at the changing relationships between reason and emotion. The seminar will ask what emotions look like within specific disciplinary formations such as philosophy, psychology, economics, art history, literature, anthropology, brain science. And what about technology? Has research into artificial intelligence and smart machines changed our understanding of human emotions as human? Does “cyber-life,” with its virtual communities, open new avenues for the exchange and evolution of affective ties or close down others? The seminar also welcomes research on the ways affect is distributed across national, ethnic, racial, class, and gender differences by different philosophical and cultural systems, and the ways emotional categories and images have helped establish the “cultural differences” that are said to distinguish East from West or North from South.

For a full description of the research topic as well as information about fellowships and affiliation, see the Center web-site at [http://www.brown.edu/Departments/Pembroke Center](http://www.brown.edu/Departments/Pembroke%20Center) or contact the Center at 401 863-2643 or through Elizabeth_Barboza@brown.edu.



Pembroke Center roundtable on “The Aesthetic Symptom.” From left, Lydia Goehr, Philosophy, Columbia University and Barbara Johnson, Comparative Literature and English, Harvard University.

Pembroke Seminar

This interdisciplinary seminar meets weekly throughout the academic year. Participants include Pembroke Center post-doctoral fellows, Brown faculty research fellows, graduate research fellows, other selected students, and faculty research affiliates from other institutions.



Pembroke Center roundtable on "The Aesthetic Symptom." Khachig Tololyan, English, Wesleyan University; Brian Locke, Ph.D. candidate in American Civilization, Brown University

1998–99 Roundtable "The Aesthetic Symptom"



Pembroke Center roundtable on "The Aesthetic Symptom." Monique Roelofs, Post-doctoral fellow; Paget Henry, Afro-American Studies and Sociology, Brown University

1998–99 Roundtable The Aesthetic Symptom March 5–6, 1999

Invited participants:

Lydia Goehr
Philosophy
Columbia University

Richard Shusterman
Philosophy
Temple University

Barbara Johnson
Comparative Literature
and English
Harvard University

Madhu Dubey
English and African
American Studies
Northwestern University

Dorothy Ko
History
Rutgers University

Visiting Scholars

1998–99:

Rosalind Krauss
Art History and Archaeology
Columbia University
Ruth Burt Ekstrom Lecturer

Isaac Julien
Afro-American Studies
Harvard University
Susan Ball Lecturer

Michele Wallace
English
Graduate School of CUNY

Denise Riley
Lecturer
University of East Anglia

1998–99 Post-Doctoral Fellows



Alexander T. Des Forges

*Ph.D. in Chinese Literature
Princeton University
Artemis A. W. and Martha S.
Joukowsky Fellow*

Project: *Aesthetics and the Material Text: Risk, Accumulation, and Destruction*

Alex Des Forges reads theorists of the aesthetic from Pierre Bourdieu to Walter Benjamin with reference to civil service examination essays, book burnings, and state-sponsored publishing houses in nineteenth-century China, subjecting these theorists of artistic production to a counter-interrogation based on the critical discourses found in Chinese texts and practices. He considers the place of risk, suppression, and industrial self-cultivation in the aesthetic, and instead of conceiving of a special "Chinese case" against which theories with universal aspirations can be tested, articulates a double cultural critique which calls into question the opposition between general – read Western – theory and the (non-Western) instance of its application that remains dominant in the humanities to this day.

Alexander Des Forges is a post-doctoral fellow at the Fairbank Center for East Asian Research at Harvard University and, in the spring term of 2000, Visiting Assistant Professor of Chinese Literature at the University of Michigan



Monique Roelofs

*Ph.D. in Philosophy
University of Maryland, College Park
Carol G. Lederer Fellow*

Project: *Aesthetic Experience: Its Place in the Mind and Its Commitment to Politics*

The project proposes a critical conception of aesthetic experience and value. Philosophical and sociocultural developments have called into question the phenomenal, semantic, and communal significance that philosophers have traditionally found in aesthetic experience. The idea that the aesthetic occupies a substantive place in a theory of subjectivity and society has come to seem increasingly utopian or oppressive. By locating the aesthetic in a relational dynamic, this project defends the public (and counterpublic) status of aesthetic objects, negotiates a balance between historicity and normativity, and outlines avenues for formulating a workable concept of the aesthetic, one that can galvanize our relations with art and culture, community and environment, desire and embodiment.

Monique Roelofs teaches aesthetics at Bryant College and continues this year as a visiting scholar at the Pembroke Center.



Ann Seaton

*Ph.D. in English and American Literature, Harvard University
Nancy L. Buc Fellow*

Project: *The Mulatto Sublime: The Rhetoric of Miscegenation*

Ann Seaton argues that the rhetoric of race has been important to all American writers. Beginning with the paradoxical enlightenment ideas about race, humanity, and freedom that are introduced into the American context of slavery, she uses miscegenation and white identity as starting points for a study of American literature that disputes the notion that only "blacks" have – or are concerned with – race. Reading canonical white writers, she suggests ways to think about style as a function of intersections between race and aesthetics. She reads the Emersonian ellipsis, for instance, or the Hawthornian symbol, racially, grounding her analyses in points where the presumption of a universal or disinterested "literariness" has blocked other kinds of readings.

Ann Seaton is an Assistant Professor of English at Skidmore College



Leslie Bostrom, Visual Art, Pembroke
Faculty Fellow, 1998–99

Faculty Research Fellows

Leslie Bostrom
Visual Art

Daniel Kim
English and Ethnic Studies

Philip Rosen
Modern Culture and Media

Graduate Research Fellows

Brian Locke
American Civilization

Denise Davis
Comparative Literature

Daniel Perlin
Portuguese and Brazilian Studies

Pembroke Center Affiliates

1998–99

Rogaia Mustafa Abusharaf
Anthropology
Connecticut College

Gail Bederman
History
Notre Dame

Mary Bellhouse
Political Science
Providence College

Paula Caplan
Psychology
Independent Scholar

Elizabeth Grossman
Art & Architectural History
Rhode Island School of Design

Ashmita Khasnabish
English Literature
Independent Scholar

Gloria-Jean Masciarotte
English
Development & Marketing

Tytti Soila
Literature & Philosophy
Stockholm University

Victoria Wilcox
Medical Psychology
Independent Scholar



Anika Streitfeld, 1999 recipient of the Joan Wallach Scott Prize, awarded annually for an outstanding honors thesis in Women's Studies; Lois Cucullu, 1999 recipient of the Marie J. Langlois Dissertation Prize, for an outstanding dissertation in the area of women's studies; and Rebecca Schulman, 1999 recipient of the Helen Terry MacLeod Prize, awarded annually for an outstanding honors thesis from any department on issues related to women and gender.

Pembroke Center Reaches Endowment Goal

The Pembroke Center is pleased to announce the completion of its endowment campaign. The \$3,000,000 goal was reached this summer with the sale of the Otis Smith Farm in Cumberland, Rhode Island. The farm, which includes a house and surrounding land, was left in a will to Pembroke College. When Brown decided to sell the property, it was agreed that it would be most appropriate to place the proceeds of the sale in the Center's endowment fund.

While the sale of the property is important, the Pembroke Center wishes to acknowledge all the gifts it has received. Since 1982, the Center has awarded fifty-one residential post-doctoral fellowships to young scholars. The Center now supports, on an annual basis, three post-doctoral fellows, three faculty research fellows, three graduate research fellows, and three or four distinguished visiting lecturers. We thank the many benefactors who have made this possible.



Barbara Anton, Director of Alumnae Affairs

Barbara Anton to Retire December 31

Barbara Anton, Director of Alumnae Affairs at the Center for the past sixteen years, will retire on December 31. Barbara came to Brown from the Center for the Education of Women at the University of Michigan. In 1983 she joined the newly established Pembroke Center and helped create the Pembroke Center Associates. Under her leadership the Pembroke Associates grew to be an alumnae/i organization of more than five hundred members, with a governing Council of twenty-five members, and a long history of dynamic and generous support for the Center.

In the course of her work, Barbara developed an active outreach program to make the Center's resources available to the larger Brown and Rhode Island communities. Programs sponsored by the Associates are open to the public and include such recent successful events as

the 1996 conference on "American Families in the Age of 'Family Values,'" and the 1999 symposium on "Women's Health: Critical Issues, New Frontiers."

As the Pembroke Center's liaison with the Development Office, Barbara's work has been crucial to the Center's efforts to build a solid foundation for its many programs. Barbara organized campaigns and events to raise funds for the Christine Dunlap Farnham Archives at Brown and to support the Center's recently completed three million-dollar endowment drive.

Barbara received her Bachelor's degree from Clark University in Massachusetts and her Master's degree from the University of Michigan. While at Brown she served on the steering committee of the Women Administrators of Brown, and is past president of the Rhode Island Association of Women in Education.

Anyone who has worked with Barbara Anton over the years knows that the Pembroke Center and Brown University have been most fortunate to have her with us.

Joan W. Scott Receives Award

Joan Wallach Scott, the founding director of the Pembroke Center, has received the 1999 award from the Hans Sigrist Foundation at the University of Bern, Switzerland, for her outstanding and pioneering research in the field of Gender Studies. This internationally refereed award is awarded annually to distinguished scientists and carries with it a generous prize to be used for continued research. Professor Scott will receive the award at a formal ceremony in Bern.

differences:

A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies

Naomi Schor, Yale University
Elizabeth Weed
Ellen Rooney
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Lloyd Pratt
Managing Editor

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Pembroke Center

Ellen Rooney
Director

Elizabeth Weed
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Barbara Anton
Coordinator of Alumnae Affairs

Elizabeth Barboza
Coordinating Secretary

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