

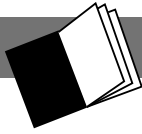
# WOMEN

Our 25th year of service

IN HIGHER EDUCATION

AUGUST 2016

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## BPI Propels Incarcerated Individuals Into Purposeful Futures

**J**ennel Nesbitt was incarcerated for 11 years. She says it was a journey defined by resilience and transformation. The early years were filled with anger, but when she was accepted to the Bard Prison Initiative (BPI), a program run by Bard College NY, her situation went from negative to positive. Given her background, she didn't expect to be accepted, but when she was, her life began to have meaning.

Founded in 1999 by Max Kenner, then a student at Bard, BPI has made a significant impact on prison culture and postrelease success rates for its students. To date, approximately 400 Bard degrees have been conferred.

**Dr. Megan Callaghan**, director of college operations for BPI, is responsible for recruiting faculty for BPI and outlining the curriculum. In addition to working with Bard faculty, BPI also collaborates with faculty from nearby colleges. All teach the same sort of courses they teach on their main campuses with the same standards, expectations and level of rigor.

### Background

Callaghan, an anthropologist, first worked with BPI while a visiting assistant professor at Bard.

"In both locations, I had students who were genuinely interested in discussing new ideas, pulling apart texts and learning more about the course material. There's an obvious appeal to that kind of energy and engagement in the classroom," says Callaghan.



**Dr. Megan Callaghan**

When the position of director of college operations at BPI became available, she embraced it. She continues to be a faculty member, while also being an administrator and collaborating with colleagues who are striving to see college opportunities within prisons restored.

Prior to 1994, when inmates in state and federal prisons became ineligible for Pell Grants, higher education in prison was relatively common. Now it is dependent on privately funded programs like BPI. Callaghan and her

colleagues encourage faculty and administration around the country to start their own college in prison programs.

"Having the opportunity to do the work in the classroom that I love while also thinking longer term about the significance of this work and about what it needs to look like in the future has been very significant to me," Callaghan says. "Part of my responsibilities as an administrator come down to identifying the right people—students, faculty, advisors, tutors—inviting those people to come together in a classroom, saying something about what they're there to do and then getting out of their way and letting them do that. It's actually very exciting to see that work."



**Jennel Nesbitt**

While it's easy for Callaghan to speak about how talented, dedicated and intellectually aware BPI students are, she's wary of waxing poetic because it shouldn't be a surprise. Kenner has been very outspoken that the education system has failed many of these incarcerated individuals, and in addition to restoring college in prison opportunities, there needs to be careful consideration given to how to keep these individuals out of prison by fostering greater access to higher education.

In addition to working to expand college in prison opportunities in New York state, BPI is part of the Consortium for the Liberal Arts in Prison. Callaghan says BPI is in contact with groups in

*The rate of postrelease employment is high and the recidivism rate is a stunningly low 4% for all BPI students and 2.5% for those who complete Bard degrees before leaving prison.*

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more than 10 other states.

“What I hear from faculty over and over again is that BPI is an opportunity to do the kind of teaching that drew them to academia in the first place,” Callaghan says. “They recognize the value of the kind of engagement that students bring to the classroom.”

### Impact

The rate of postrelease employment is high and the recidivism rate is a stunningly low 4% for all BPI students and 2.5% for those who complete Bard degrees before leaving prison, as opposed to 40%, the recidivism rate typically cited for prisoners in general.

“Across the board, BPI students make it clear that college is incredibly important to them,” says Callaghan. “Why it matters can be very different individual to individual, but the value the students place on their education, and the fact that it matters so much helps hold everyone to a higher standard—our faculty, administration and fellow students. Everybody works that much harder because of it.”

BPI alumni are working in a wide range of jobs, from human resources to public health to one who runs a community initiative program for young people who’ve had some involvement with the court system. Many BPI students return to the neighborhoods they came from upon release and work to make their communities better.

### Female BPI students

From 2006 to 2012, BPI operated inside the Bayview Correctional Facility, a women’s prison in New York City. It was evacuated during Hurricane Sandy and then permanently closed in 2013.

Nesbitt was among the BPI students affected, and she despaired that her higher education opportunity had evaporated. Eventually, she was able to return to classes and finish the semester. She completed her associate degree requirements before her release and is now working and going to school to complete her bachelor’s degree.

Immediately after the evacuation at Bayview, Callaghan and others at BPI worked to make sure the students could complete their Bard degrees. Next, they established a new location inside a women’s prison.

BPI currently enrolls approximately 30 students at the Taconic Correctional Facility. That is 10% of the BPI stu-

dent body.

“This was a moment of crisis that we had no choice but to turn into an opportunity,” Callaghan says.

One student who was among the first cohort of BPI students at Taconic says she was determined to redefine her life but didn’t know how until higher education presented itself. During the entrance exam, she was asked to interpret a literary passage and then asked to articulate how education was important to her.

“When I received the letter of acceptance, I saw the words *thinking, discipline, commitment, opportunity* and *transformation*. I saw these words as a new beginning,” says the student, who declined to give her name. She earned her associate degree in 2015. She is still incarcerated and working on her bachelor’s degree.

“We have learned to be patient. We have learned to continue when it’s difficult; we have learned to listen to each other,” she said at the 2015 graduation. “We see each other as students and as people with possibility and a future. And it is a future in a world that needs what we have to contribute.”

—LE

*Many BPI students return to the neighborhoods they came from upon release and work to make their communities better.*

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As of July 1, 2016

## Celebrating Pat Summitt, Ambassador for Women's Sports

A five-year battle with Alzheimer's disease ended Pat Summitt's life at 64, but not before she could make history as the winningest coach in Division I basketball and establish a legacy of mentorship and positive influence for countless women.

In her 38 years coaching University of Tennessee women's basketball, she led the team to eight national titles and zero losing seasons, and her players completing athletic eligibility boast a 100% graduation rate. Summitt also coached the 1984 U.S. women's basketball team, which took home the Olympic gold medal. President Barack Obama awarded her the 2012 Presidential Medal of Freedom.

Her response to UT's offer to coach the men's team exemplifies her commitment to women's sports: "Why is that considered a step up?"

—*Inside Higher Ed* on June 29, 2016

## Long Workweeks Linked to Life-Threatening Illnesses in Women

An Ohio State study finds that "work weeks that averaged 60 hours per week or more over three decades appear to triple the risk of diabetes, cancer, heart trouble and arthritis for women," and "especially for women who have to juggle multiple roles."

Men working long hours fare better, and according to the study's lead author Allard Dembe, the difference may be tied to gendered patterns of responsibility at home and gendered valuations of work versus family.

Dembe encourages employers and government regulators to pay attention to these risks because "companies benefit in terms of quality of work and medical costs when their workers are healthier."

—*The Ohio State Newsroom* on June 16, 2016

## Supreme Court Upholds Affirmative Action

In *Fisher v. University of Texas*, the Supreme Court ruled that "admissions officials may continue to consider race as one factor among many in ensuring a diverse student body," reports *The New York Times*. The 4–3 decision was not expected, and the ruling contains a warning that not all university affirmative action programs "will pass constitutional muster." However, affirmative action's supporters "hailed the decision as a landmark."

Said Harvard law professor Laurence H. Tribe, "No decision since *Brown v. Board of Education* has been as important as *Fisher* will prove to be in the long history of racial inclusion and educational diversity."

Writing for the majority, Justice Anthony M. Kennedy cautioned, "Considerable deference is owed to a university in defining those intangible characteristics, like student body diversity, that are central to its identity and educational mission. But still, it remains an enduring challenge to our nation's education system to reconcile the pursuit of diversity with the constitutional promise of equal treatment and dignity." Justice Samuel A. Alito Jr. responded with a "furious 51-page dissent."

The case was brought by Abigail Fisher, a white woman who claimed she "was denied admission based on her race."

—*The New York Times* on June 23, 2016

## ¿Quién es más American?

By publicizing the fact that they are undocumented, two Texas valedictorians have catalyzed what is becoming a quintessentially U.S. phenomenon: conflating facts problematically to justify polarized perspectives and stake territory.

The facts are that Mayte Lara Ibarra and Larissa Martinez are valedictorians of their high school classes and are receiving preferential college funding awarded by virtue of their scholastic success. Not necessarily related to the first facts, they are also undocumented immigrants from Mexico.

By relating the facts in social media channels, they are, at one pole, activists positively fleshing out the spectrum of who immigrants are and can be, and at the other, undesirables "taking advantage of the system."

*NewsWatch* would like to suggest that we first celebrate these young women's achievements. Ibarra is headed to the University of Texas at Austin and Martinez to Yale University CT. Moreover, they manifest the Horatio Alger "come from nothing and pull yourself up by your bootstraps" story like few others, rendering them as successfully "American" as they come.

Second, let's tackle the scarcity mentality that silences historical precedent in favor of racism and xenophobia, the mentality that makes the detail of one's immigration status relevant to whether or not one deserves to reap the rewards of hard work, ambition, capacity and the right to "Americanness" and all its privileges.

—*The New York Times* on June 10, 2016

## Is Stopping the Tenure Clock Backfiring?

Although a 2012 study suggested that policies for stopping the tenure clock for new parents negatively impacted men's salaries, a new study suggests that the policy may be helping men achieve tenure at top institutions while hurting women's chances.

Conducted in economics departments ranked among the top 50 in the United States, the study found that "the success rate for male [tenure] candidates increased by 19.4 percentage points after stopping the clock was offered. For women, the rate fell by 22.4 percentage points."

According to the study paper, "Men are more likely to be productive while their tenure clock is stopped and women are much less able to do so, yet they are treated equally under these policies. As a result, the policies actually increase the family gap in economics at research-intensive universities."

Back to the drawing board?

—*Inside Higher Ed* on June 27, 2016

## Supreme Court Backs Abortion Rights

In the "strongest endorsement of abortion rights in two decades," the Supreme Court struck down a Texas abortion law, ruling that a "Republican-backed 2013 Texas law placed an undue burden on women exercising their right under the U.S. Constitution to end a pregnancy."

The ruling likely renders restrictive legislation in other conservative states unconstitutional. The Supreme Court has appeals pending for cases in Mississippi and Wisconsin that, like the Texas case, involve admitting privilege laws.

The ruling also affirms abortion as a national right not subject to states' lawmaking authorities.

—*Reuters* on June 28, 2016

## Complete Transgender Health Care for Vanderbilt Students

Though not on the vanguard nationally, Vanderbilt University TN is pushing the envelope in the conservative south by adding gender-reassignment surgeries to student health care options. Student health insurance already covers hormone therapy, and adding this benefit now enables health care providers to offer complete health care options for trans students.

Students coming forward to ask for the option commonly drive the move to offer it, according to Genny Beemyn, coordinator of Campus Pride's Transgender Clearinghouse and director of the University of Massachusetts at Amherst's Stonewall Center. Such is the case at Vanderbilt, according to Louise Hanson, the director of the student health center.

—*The Tennessean* on June 8, 2016

## UConn Revokes Cosby's Honorary Degree as Part of Sexual Assault Stance

The University of Connecticut rescinded an honorary degree for the first time as part of its efforts to work "diligently to prevent sexual assault and to support and care for victims." UConn joins the many colleges who have revoked degrees awarded to Bill Cosby "because he has admitted to conduct that is contrary to the values of the University of Connecticut."

Cosby was awarded the degree in 1996, and the board voted unanimously to rescind it on the recommendation of the undergraduate student government and the University Senate.

—*Inside Higher Ed* on June 30, 2016

## Academics Condemn Yale Professor's Conduct

In an open letter, 300 academics have taken a stand condemning the conduct of Yale University CT philosophy professor Thomas Pogge. The signatories "strongly condemn his harmful actions toward women, most notably women of color, and the entire academic community."

Pogge denies the sexual harassment charges, but the letter's signatories claim that "the information now in the public domain—including that provided by Pogge himself [...]—suffices to demonstrate that Pogge has engaged in behavior that violates the norms of appropriate professional conduct."

—*Inside Higher Ed* on June 21, 2016

## Georgetown Survey Reveals High Rates of Sexual Misconduct

Joining the company of more than two dozen prominent research universities with similar findings, Georgetown University DC has discovered via a survey that 31% of female undergraduates "had been sexually penetrated or sexually touched without their consent since they arrived

at the school." Moreover, respondents were attacked using physical force or while they were unable to provide consent.

President John J. DeGioia said "the results showed an 'unacceptable' level of sexual misconduct at the university," and the university will establish a task force.

At issue here, and nationwide, are controversies over whether or not the numbers are representative of the issue and how knowing the numbers will shift the culture.

—*The Washington Post* on June 16, 2016

## Former Yale Student, Accused of Sexual Assault and Expelled, Sues

In a lawsuit accusing Yale University CT of wrongfully expelling him, former basketball captain Jack Montague is attempting to make the case that the university's action was unjustified and made "to show it was tough on sexual misconduct following a survey on sexual assault by the Association of American Universities."

Yale has countered to claim that "the lawsuit is factually inaccurate and baseless and the university plans a vigorous defense."

The lawsuit seeks damages and "asks that Montague be reinstated as a student or for Yale to reopen the proceedings against him." No criminal action has been filed.

—*Herald-Star* on June 9, 2016

## The Promise of the Stanford Rape Case

Readers of *NewsWatch* know that campus sexual assault is both a pressing concern and so common that it defines our contemporary normal. How then does the Brock Turner case distinguish itself from the fray?

In short, it messes with our ideas and archetypes of good and evil, and it reveals the little man behind the curtain. To wit, a golden boy falls. But "not too far," says the man. In response, a victim turns everywoman and rises up to shift power. Others follow suit.

This promise is complicated, and has yet to realize its full potential, but perhaps we have a sea change in the making. It's possible that the case is becoming a lynchpin rallying point for teasing out and addressing the broad spectrum of issues in play that enable campus sexual assault to flourish—misogyny, the boys club, privilege, power, etc.

Issues include a lenient judge with a privileged defendant and a father's defense of his son on one hand and the public outcry over the sentence and the father's logic on the other, plus the victim's empowered and empowering statement to her rapist. All of this went viral in social media, along with a rallying cry for an end to rape culture.

Now on the table are a bid to recall Judge Aaron Persky and Turner's ban from competing in any future USA Swimming events, including the Olympic trials.

For more details, check out the publications below and the many others plus the various social media channels.

—*The Guardian* on June 2, 2016; *The Washington Post* on June 6, 2016; and *Vice* on June 10, 2016

## A Masculinity Programming Panacea?

U.S. universities and colleges are implementing a range of masculinity programs designed to address everything from retention to substance abuse to toxic masculinity and campus sexual assault. Programming rhetoric tends to

emphasize “authenticity.”

For example, said Zack Ritter, the University of the Redlands CA associate director for diversity and inclusion, “We look at where the barriers are to being an authentic person, and that includes ideas about sports, drugs, drinking and sex.”

Although it’s unclear whether dialog and interventions of this kind are effective at reducing, for examples, alcohol consumption and sexual assault, John Foubert, professor of higher education and student affairs at Oklahoma State University and founder of the sexual assault prevention program One in Four, believes that “if a program is there to create a space for men to talk about masculinity, [it] is a positive thing.”

The programs are “increasing, but not widespread,” according to Kevin Kruger, president of NASPA: Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education.

—*Inside Higher Ed* on June 29, 2016

## Women’s Enrollment Sets Record at Coast Guard Academy

The U.S. Coast Guard Academy CT welcomed its next class with a 38/62% female/male ratio. Although women’s enrollment in all the military academies has continued to climb since President Gerald Ford signed a law requiring the admission of women, the Naval Academy in Annapolis MD runs a distant second place with a 28% anticipated enrollment rate for women in the class of 2020. The numbers for West Point NY and the Air Force Academy CO are around 22%.

The Service Women’s Action Network and American Civil Liberties Union filed suit in 2015 “seeking information on gender targets, arguing women were underrepresented considering opportunities in military leadership and the repeal of rules excluding women from combat and other duties.”

The issue of gender targets is, however, contested, and Michele Fitzpatrick, who was admitted to the Coast Guard Academy in 1976, has taught at the Academy and does contract work for the Coast Guard, does not believe in targets. In her opinion, “you want the best person for the job, regardless of gender.”

—*Diverse Issues in Higher Education* on June 30, 2016

## Students Call for ‘Decolonizing’ Yale’s English Major

Yale University CT students have launched a petition to end the English department’s two-semester requirement that majors study an all-white and male cast of “major English poets.” The 160 signatories are asking for a shift in focus for the pre-1800/1900 requirements “to deliberately include literatures relating to gender, race, sexuality, ableism, and ethnicity.”

Said student Adriana Miele in a column for the *Yale Daily News*, although students “are taught how to analyze canonical literature works,” they “are not taught to question why it is canonical, or the implications of canonical works that actively oppress and marginalize non-white, non-male, trans and queer people.”

Not surprisingly, the petition has received some faculty support and some criticism.

—*The Guardian* on June 1, 2016



—AD

# Women on the Move

As of July 1, 2016

- **Dr. Barbara A. Abercrombie** moves from associate vice chancellor for administration and chief human resources officer at the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville to vice president for human resources and organizational effectiveness at Texas A&M University.
- **Dr. Irene Aiken** becomes dean of the School of Graduate Studies at the University of North Carolina at Pembroke.
- **Katherine Ankersen** moves from chair of the Department of Interior Architecture and Product Design at Kansas State University to dean of the College of Architecture at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.
- **Dr. Sharon Basso** becomes dean of students and vice president of student affairs at Claremont McKenna College CA. She has been serving as associate vice provost and dean of students at Lehigh University PA.
- **Yvonne Berumen** moves from vice president of scholarships and academic support services for the Hispanic Scholarship Fund to vice president for admission and financial aid at Pitzer College CA.
- **Mary Lu Bilek, JD**, will be dean of the School of Law at the City University of New York as of August 15. She has been serving as dean of the University of Massachusetts School of Law.
- **Dr. DeMethra LaSha Bradley** moves from assistant dean for academic and student affairs in the College of Education and Social Services at the University of Vermont to dean of students and assistant vice president for student affairs at Macalester College MN.
- **Dr. Donna Breault** moves from director of program review and analytics at Missouri State University to dean of the Dwight Schar College of Education at Ashland University OH.
- **Gwendolyn Caples** moves from director of the Welcome Center and director of alumni and community relations to assistant vice president for institutional advancement at Jackson State University MI.
- **Dr. Leslie Carver** becomes provost at Thurgood Marshall College, one of six undergraduate colleges at the University of California, San Diego.
- **Dr. Rachel Croson** moves from dean of the College of Business at the University of Texas at Arlington to dean of the College of Social Science at Michigan State University.
- **Deborah Davis** will become vice president for clinical affairs at Virginia Commonwealth University as of October 1. She will also serve as CEO of Virginia Commonwealth University Health Systems Hospitals and Clinics.
- **Dr. Geraldine de Berly** becomes vice provost for continuing and professional education at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.
- **Dr. Judy Didion** moves from dean of the College of Nursing at Lourdes University OH to dean of the School of Nursing at Oakland University MI.
- **Dr. Rebecca Doerge** becomes dean of the Mellon College of Science at Carnegie Mellon University PA.
- **Jenna Friedman, JD**, moves from junior specialist to gender equity specialist in the Office of Gender Equity at the University of Hawaii at Manoa.

- **Giovanna M. Genard** moves from acting to assistant vice president for strategic communication and marketing and chief marketing officer at Old Dominion University VA. She is the first Latina member of the president's cabinet in university history.

- **Patty Haberberger** moves from assistant vice president for human resources at Saint Louis University MO to vice chancellor for human resources for the University of Missouri.

- **Dr. Melina Hale** becomes vice provost for academic initiatives at the University of Chicago IL.

- **Dr. Sonia A. Hirt** will move from associate dean for academic affairs at the College of Architecture and Urban Studies at Virginia Tech to dean of the School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation at the University of Maryland, as of October 1.

- **Elena Hood** becomes the inaugural director of the Inter-Tribal Resource Center at the University of California, San Diego.

- **Dr. Deneese L. Jones** becomes vice president for academic affairs at Trinity University TX.

- **Dr. Jenny L. Jones** becomes dean of the Whitney M. Young Jr. School of Social Work at Clark Atlanta University GA.

- **Michelle Jones-Johnson** becomes chief diversity officer and vice president for talent development at Worcester Polytechnic Institute MA.

- **Dr. Elizabeth A. Klonoff** becomes dean of the College of Graduate Studies at the University of Central Florida. She will also serve as vice president for research.

- **Cindy Leavitt** moves from deputy chief information officer for the medical school at the University of Michigan to vice president for computer services and chief information officer at Temple University PA.

- **Beth E. McDermott** moves from associate vice president for development to vice president for development at Boston College MA.

- **Dr. Gillian McKnight-Tutein** becomes vice president of academic and student affairs at Front Range Community College CO.

- **Dr. Kari Knutson Miller** becomes dean of University Extended Education and associate vice president of international programs and global engagement at California State University-Fullerton.

- **Dr. Kate Miller** moves from dean of the College of Geosciences at Texas A&M University to provost and vice president for academic affairs at the University of Wyoming.

- **Nina G. Moser** moves from senior advancement officer of principal gifts at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute NY to vice president for college advancement at Southern Vermont College.

- **Dr. Janet Nelson** will become vice president for research and economic development at the University of Idaho as of September 1. She has been serving as associate vice chancellor for research development at the University of Tennessee.

- **Erin O'Hara O'Connor** moves from director of graduate studies in the doctoral program in law and economics at Vanderbilt Law School TN to dean of the College of Law at Florida State University.

- **Dr. Phyllis Paul** moves from associate dean of the School of Music and Dance at the University of Oregon to

dean of the College of Creative Arts and Communication at Youngstown State University OH.

- **Dr. Vimala Pillari** moves from dean of the Whitney M. Young Jr. School of Social Work at Clark Atlanta University GA to dean of the College of Health Sciences and Human Services at Tarleton State University TX.

- **Amanda Clay Powers** moves from research department coordinator at the Mitchell Memorial Library at Mississippi State University to dean of library services at Mississippi University for Women.

- **Dr. Patricia Pierce Ramsey** becomes provost at Lincoln University PA.

- **Karen Richardson** moves from director of graduate admissions to dean of undergraduate admissions and enrollment management for the School of Arts and Science and the School of Engineering at Tufts University MA.

- **Dr. Emily Roxworthy** moves from interim associate vice chancellor for faculty diversity and equity to provost of Earl Warren College CA.

- **Suzanne Sears** moves from associate dean for public services for the University of North Texas libraries to dean of libraries at Texas Woman's University. She will oversee all libraries at the Denton, Dallas and Houston campuses.

- **Dr. Alanna Shanahan** moves from deputy director of athletics and senior women's administrator at the University of Pennsylvania to director of athletics and recreation at Johns Hopkins University MD.

- **Amy B. Smith** becomes senior vice president and chief marketing and communications officer at Texas A&M University. She is a former executive for Raytheon and also for the public relations firm Burson-Marsteller.

- **Ne'Keisha Stepney** moves from assistant dean to dean for business and career technologies at Waubensee Community College IL.

- **Margo Steurbaut** moves from vice president for finance at the University of Southern California to vice president for administration and chief financial officer for the California Institute of Technology.

- **Dr. Ashley Stokes** becomes assistant vice president for engagement at Colorado State University. She will also serve as deputy director of CSU Extension. She has been serving as assistant dean for veterinary admissions and student services in the College of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences at Colorado State University.

- **Dr. Tammi Vacha-Haase** moves from associate dean at Colorado State University to dean of the Graduate College at Boise State University ID.

- **Dr. Lori Werth** becomes the inaugural provost at the University of Pikeville KY.

- **Marie Williams** moves from associate vice president for human resources and administrative services at Ball State University IN to associate vice chancellor for human resources at North Carolina State University.

- **Tamra Wright** becomes director of diversity, equity and inclusion in the School of Public and Environmental Affairs at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis. She has been serving as vice president for the Simon Youth Foundation.

- **Kishan Zuber** moves from assistant dean of the Graduate School at Binghamton University NY to vice president for enrollment services at Wells College NY. 

# Use Your Whole Brain for Workplace Success and Harmony

By Karen Costa

It seems like no coincidence that as I write this review of Jill Bolte Taylor's book, *My Stroke of Insight: A Brain Scientist's Personal Journey* (Viking, 2008), that Candace Payne—aka Chewbacca Mask Lady—a stay-at-home mom from Texas, has just set a record for the most viewed Facebook Live video to date: as of this writing it has about 136 million views. Her Internet nickname is a misnomer though, because it's not the mask that made this video go viral; it's Candace's infectious, unstoppable and heartfelt laugh. It's the sound of joy.

Taylor would call the action of taking the time to laugh "stepping to the right." That's the direction she was forced to take after her stroke turned down the volume on her left brain, volume that remained at this level for the eight years it took her to fully recover.

Joy, according to Dr. Taylor, is biologically located in the right brain, the side of Dr. Taylor's brain that continued to function after a powerful and debilitating stroke struck the left side of her brain, where logic and order rule. One could imagine that had Candace created a video to explain the logical decision-making process she used when purchasing the mask, she would not have been asked to appear on *Good Morning America*. Instead, Candace, the Joy Lady, gave us worldwide permission to quiet our very busy left brains, if only for four minutes and four seconds.

You'll hardly be able to put down Taylor's retelling of her stroke and recovery, a true story of human triumph in astounding circumstances. But you'll stay for much more. What can Taylor's stroke of insight offer us as women in higher education? How can we better harness the creativity, spontaneity, imagination and empathy of our right brains in the workplace and in our personal lives?

## Know thy brain

In a recent *New York Times* essay entitled "[Stop Saying 'I Feel Like'](#)," Molly Worthen argues that feelings lead to dead ends, and that expressing a feeling instead of a thought could "halt argument in its tracks." The mind reels as to why that would be a bad thing. Dr. Taylor more effectively distinguishes the types of feelings we experience, all of which are processed in the brain, something critics of feelings seem wont to ignore.

When we drink a soda, we feel fizz on our tongue. That's the first type of feeling, better termed a sensation. Our brain receives and interprets external information from our five senses.

Then there are emotions like sadness and anger. These originate in our limbic brain. That's the second type of emotion, like when you watch *Finding Nemo* and feel a tug on your heartstrings as Nemo is taken from his father.

Finally, there are the feelings that are generated in the most recent evolutionary addition to our brain, the cerebral cortex. On its right side, the brain generates a feeling known as intuition. It's a type of knowing that comes to us whole without any logical process behind it.

Our right brains, according to Taylor, are where we process nonverbal communications and energy. It's a knowing beyond left-brain reason, but a knowing all the same. This is important and real information that is not to be discounted.

Consider how you view, react to and talk about feelings in the workplace. Do you value your own intuition and that of your colleagues, supervisors or employees?

Take time to ask people what their gut (a colloquialism we use to describe the right brain) is telling them.

If the numbers add up around a new project but you still have a sense that you are moving in the wrong direction, bring that feeling to the table.

Also, learn to articulate your right-brain intelligence: "This looks great on paper, but my intuition is telling me that this is a bad idea. Can we take an additional day to consider this?"

Be aware of anyone who attempts to keep feelings out of the conversation. They are likely stuck in what Taylor calls "extreme left-brain" thinking and have lost the ability to use their whole brain.

## Notice your loops

Taylor, a neuroanatomist who was working at the Harvard Brain Bank at the time of her stroke, had to start her left brain over from scratch in many ways. When her mother asked Taylor to add one plus one, Taylor sought clarification by asking, "What is a one?"

Meanwhile, in the silence of her left-brain activity, Taylor's right brain flourished and flowed. She reveled in connections and creativity, and in feeling one with the present moment, all of which had been previously living in the shadow of her very active left brain.

Dr. Taylor makes use of an extended analogy that conceptualizes the brain as a computer. As her left brain begins to "come back online" after her surgery and recovery, she begins to notice what she calls "cognitive loops" that had been less visible to her before her stroke.

Our brains, she argues, develop favorite habits. Once established, these habits take on a life of their own. For example, you may decide, as Taylor once had, that you hate a certain vegetable, but upon trying it again at another point in your life, it might become a new favorite. We do this not only with food preferences, but also in how we approach our world, our work and our relationships.

Do you seem to rehash the same disagreements at work? Taylor encourages us to talk back to our brains when we see these loops forming and to notice how they feel in our

*continued on page 14*

*How can we better harness the creativity, spontaneity, imagination and empathy of our right brains in the workplace and in our personal lives?*

# Ahmed's Resignation and Feminism in Action

In May, Dr. Sarah Ahmed announced her resignation from both her position as a professor in media studies and as the director of the Centre for Feminist Research (CFR) at Goldsmiths, University of London, UK. Her resignation was a shock to many who follow and appreciate her work as a cultural theorist and outspoken feminist. People responded with disbelief, shock and support on Twitter and Facebook.

Ahmed is a well-known scholar of postcolonialism, critical race theory, feminist theory and queer theory.

She's written on feminism, diversity work, happiness and race. Importantly, she has also analyzed how institutions, including universities and colleges, manage (or perhaps, mismanage) issues of diversity. A lot of her thought process appears on her blog, [feministkilljoys](#).

Being a feminist killjoy is about both Ahmed's philosophy and her politics. Her resignation emerges as evidence of both.

## Her philosophy

[feministkilljoys](#) shows how Ahmed's work and analysis develops over time and over blog posts. Readers can engage with her ideas about feminism, race and living a feminist life. The blog's tagline is "killing joy as a worldmaking project," which comes from a chapter of the same title in *The Promise of Happiness*.

The feminist killjoy ruins "the happiness of others." She's "a spoilsport because she refuses to convene, to assemble, or to meet up over happiness."

Rather than trying to be happy in an unjust world, the feminist killjoy is angry. She points out inequalities including structural sexism, misogyny, racism, homophobia, transphobia, sexual assault and violence. Killing joy brings attention to the faults of our world, but there's always the hope that our combined efforts can create a more just world.

## Taking a stand

In a short blog post dated May 30, 2016, and titled "Resignation," Ahmed explained that she resigned to "protest against the failure to address the problem of sexual harassment" at Goldsmiths.

While her resignation might have appeared out of the blue, recent blog posts and her keynote for the National Women's Studies Association in 2015, "Feminism and Fragility," offered clues that moving on, or even resigning, can be a feminist option.

In the keynote, Ahmed notes, "No wonder feminist work is often about timing: sometimes we are too fragile to do this work; it can be too risky to risk being shattered when we are not ready to put ourselves back together again."

Ahmed explains how women of color, more often than other people, are tasked with working on issues of diversity within broken institutional systems. They end up carrying the burden of other people, alongside their own, which is exhausting and demoralizing.

Diversity workers especially encounter institutional walls again and again in their attempts to address problems and offer solutions. Institutions often don't want solutions, just less talk of the problems.

## Sexual harassment and assault in UK universities

In 2014, the National Union of Students (NUS) conducted a [survey](#) that showed that sexual harassment was

a real problem for all universities in the United Kingdom. Thirty-seven percent of women and 16% of men reported unwanted sexual advances.

A third of the women surveyed noted that they faced gender-based harassment. Two-thirds of the students admitted noticing other students tolerating unwanted sexual comments.

The NUS president suggested that the leadership of universities had to start paying attention to this pressing problem.

At Goldsmiths, Ahmed previously worked on the issue of sexual harassment, including a CFR event, "Sexual Harassment in Higher Education." In December 2015, she posted her comments for the event to her blog.

Rather than insisting that sexual harassment was a problem that only existed elsewhere, Ahmed discussed the importance of understanding how it happens at our own institutions.

Moreover, she notes that institutions can actually enable sexual harassment by allowing it to become part of the larger culture rather than directly handling those who harass. Sexual harassment continues because the costs of fighting against it are so high. The person who was harassed can get worn down by the institution into accepting harassment.

Often, those harassed become problems for institutions rather than the harassers. Speaking of harassment can damage the institution's image, their beloved brand.

Institutions will often act to protect themselves rather than the people that inhabit them. Harassment continues, even as institutions claim to have a commitment to stopping it.


## Actions speak louder than words

For Ahmed, "the cost of doing this work" was too high. She thanked her students for their work against sexism on campus and their willingness to speak up about sexual harassment. "Resignation," she notes, "is a feminist issue."

The details of what happened at Goldsmiths remain vague. It is unclear what events exactly led to Ahmed's resignation. She's not offering any more details yet.

In a post from early June, "Speaking Out," Ahmed emphasizes the importance of speaking out "even when there is much that we have to leave unsaid." She notes that there were inquiries into the allegations of sexual harassment, but they did not lead a larger investigation of how the problem is institutional.

Her resignation was an "act of feminist protest." If an institution won't recognize a problem, leaving becomes a way to no longer be complicit in their actions.

Ahmed writes, "I will not reproduce a world I cannot bear, a world I do not think should be borne." Her resignation shows her commitment to her feminist ethics and politics. 

—KJB

Ahmed is the author of seven books: *Differences Matter: Feminist Theory and Postmodernism* (Cambridge University Press 1998); *Strange Encounters: Embodied Others in Post-Coloniality* (Routledge 2000); *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* (Routledge 2004); *Queer Phenomenology: Orientations, Objects, Others* (Duke University Press 2006); *The Promise of Happiness* (Duke University Press 2010); *On Being Included: Racism and Diversity in Institutional Life* (Duke University Press 2012) and *Willful Subjects* (Duke University Press 2014).



# IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

## Director, Greenlee School of Journalism and Communication

Iowa State University is conducting a national search for the Director of the Greenlee School of Journalism and Communication. The Search Committee invites letters of nomination, applications (letter of interest, full resume/CV, and contact information of at least five references), or expressions of interest to be submitted to the search firm assisting the University.

Applications will be accepted until the position is filled. However, to receive full consideration, applications must be received by September 11, 2016. For complete position details, please visit [www.parkersearch.com/Director-Greenlee](http://www.parkersearch.com/Director-Greenlee). Please send materials to the following:

Porsha Williams, Vice President  
Mitchel Bonds, Associate  
770-804-1996 ext: 113  
[pwilliams@parkersearch.com](mailto:pwilliams@parkersearch.com) || [mbonds@parkersearch.com](mailto:mbonds@parkersearch.com)

*Iowa State University is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, or protected Veteran status and will not be discriminated against.*

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Executive Search 770.804.1996 | [parkersearch.com](http://parkersearch.com)



UNIVERSITY OF  
CENTRAL  
ARKANSAS™

## PRESIDENT

The University of Central Arkansas (UCA) is conducting a national search for its next President. The Presidential Search Advisory Committee invites letters of nomination, applications (letter of interest, full resume/CV, and contact information of at least five references), or expressions of interest to be submitted to the search firm assisting UCA. Review of materials will begin immediately and continue until the appointment is made. It is preferred, however, that all nominations and applications be submitted prior to October 7, 2016. For a complete position description, please visit the Current Opportunities page at [www.parkersearch.com/uca-president](http://www.parkersearch.com/uca-president).

Laurie C. Wilder, President  
Porsha L. Williams, Vice President  
Jacob C. Anderson, Principal  
[pwilliams@parkersearch.com](mailto:pwilliams@parkersearch.com) || [janderson@parkersearch.com](mailto:janderson@parkersearch.com)  
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*The University of Central Arkansas is an affirmative action/equal opportunity institution dedicated to attracting and supporting a diverse student, faculty and staff population through enhanced multicultural learning environments and opportunities. In keeping with its nondiscrimination policy in employment, admissions and other functions and programs, the university considers employees and students on the basis of individual merit and will not discriminate against a person on the basis of gender, race or color, ethnicity, religion, spiritual beliefs, national origin, age, familial status, socioeconomic background, sexual orientation, disability, political beliefs, intellectual perspective, genetic information, military status, or other factors irrelevant to participation in its programs.*

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TEXAS A&M  
INTERNATIONAL  
UNIVERSITY

## PRESIDENT

The Board of Regents and Chancellor John Sharp of the Texas A&M University System are conducting a global search for the next President of Texas A&M International University (TAMIU) located in Laredo, Texas. The Search Advisory Committee invites letters of nomination, applications (letter of interest, full resume/CV, and contact information of at least five references), or expressions of interest to be submitted to the search firm assisting TAMIU. Review of materials will begin immediately and continue until the appointment is made. It is preferred, however, that all nominations and applications be submitted prior to September 2, 2016. For a complete position description, please visit <https://www.parkersearch.com/current-opportunities/texas-am-international-university/president>.

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## ASSOCIATE VICE PRESIDENT AND IT CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER UCF IT

The University of Central Florida is conducting a national search for the Associate Vice President and IT Chief Operating Officer, UCF IT. The Search Committee invites letters of nomination, applications (letter of interest, full resume/CV, and contact information of at least five references), or expressions of interest to be submitted to the search firm assisting the University. Review of materials will begin immediately and continue until the appointment is made. It is preferred, however, that all nominations and applications be submitted prior to September 9, 2016. For a complete position description, please visit [www.parkersearch.com/ucfavpit](http://www.parkersearch.com/ucfavpit). Send materials to the following:

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# Women Coaches Learn Nuances of Networking at Leadership Forum

Even 44 years after the passage of Title IX, women athletic coaches are still learning the ropes. They're less aggressive than male coaches in pursuing job opportunities and they're still learning the art of networking. The Alliance of Women Coaches partners with athletic conferences around the country to host regional leadership forums that combine professional development with networking opportunities.

On May 17, the America East Conference, the Northeast Conference, the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference and the Patriot League hosted a one-day women coaches leadership forum on the campus of Marist College NY. Topics covered included best practices in coaching; the importance of building relationships with team, coaches and athletic staff; job search and the unique challenges of being a female coach.

Jessica Hegmann, senior associate commissioner of the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference, says a topic that resonated for her was the unique challenges female coaches face. The panelists and participants discussed work-life balance while having a successful career.

"College athletics can be fast-paced and move quickly," Hegmann says. "It is important to step back and acknowledge other aspects of life that are just as important."

## Support across sports

The Alliance of Women Coaches was formed in 2011, an outgrowth of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Women Coaches Academy, which is a professional development program across all sports and NCAA divisions that began in 2003. After numerous Academy classes and events, it became clear that women coaches experienced similar challenges regardless of their sports.

The Alliance includes women coaches in all venues—college, high school and club sports—and presently includes 26 sports, including basketball, fencing, lacrosse, soccer, softball, swimming, track & field and volleyball.

"They can go to their coach associations to learn more soccer drills or tennis drills or technique in golf or all of those things," says Marlene Bjornsrud, executive director of the Alliance. "The professional development that will most benefit them [is] things like how do you resolve conflict? How do you manage communication? How do you deal with parents?"

A topic that comes up at every forum is the growing number of men coaching women's sports, particularly at the college level. Female coaches need guidance about how to get in the game.

"Women are less likely to put their name in the hat for jobs than men are," notes Bjornsrud. "When there's a position open, an athletic director will get dozens of résumés immediately from men seeking those coaching positions. [Athletic directors] have to be much more intentional in targeting groups of women to make sure that they get a



Participants in the Women Coaches Leadership Forum held on May 17 at Marist College.

Photo Credit: Courtesy of MAAC

diverse pool.

"One of the things that we talked about very directly is that women coaches need to be much more engaged in getting the word out to each other about job possibilities and calling on each other's behalf."

Women must be better at tapping into networks that alert them to job openings before positions even officially open. Also, women coaches need other women coaches to lobby and advocate for them.

Hegmann says this transcends individual sports. It can be a veteran basketball coach mentoring a young soccer coach on how to run a program. That is why it's important for different sports and schools to interact and build a network.

Bjornsrud says female applicants also have to do a better job in presenting themselves. At the forum, an athletic director spoke about the difference in the confidence level that male job applicants present at interviews. Men sell themselves as the best candidate for the job, while women are more timid.

Athletic directors also spoke about the importance of being better prepared and not taking anything for granted. It can be as simple as the professional quality of a résumé and cover letter.

## Common themes

Bjornsrud says there are themes that come up wherever they conduct these one-day forums. There is always interest in having established coaches and administrators share their paths to success. Strategic planning for the next job is a recurring subject. LGBTQ issues are also important—how to create safe places in college athletics, not only for student-athletes, but also for coaches.

A recurring theme is also the challenge of coaching millennials. Bjornsrud says there's work to be done in understanding millennials and communicating with them more effectively.

**Marlene Bjornsrud: "One of the things that we talked about very directly is that women coaches need to be much more engaged in getting the word out to each other about job possibilities and calling on each other's behalf."**

*continued on page 15*

# Online Portal Showcases Women's College Experiences

There's no denying that women's colleges have played a vital role in our nation's political and social history long before women were able to vote. Consider how Wellesley College MA alumna Hillary Clinton is the first woman candidate for president to be nominated by a major political party.

A collaborative project led by Bryn Mawr College PA hopes to shed light on the women's college experience and how it helped shape generations of women students.

*College Women: Documenting the History of Women in Higher Education* is an archives portal that will contain historical documents currently in the library and archives of the Pennsylvania school and the remainder of the former Seven Sisters (historically women's colleges in the Northeast). The objective is to create a "rich body of research and teaching materials."

## Important resource on women's history

The portal aims to bring together collections of scrapbooks, diaries, letters and other memorabilia from the mid-19th through the early 20th centuries of the women's colleges and digitize them. The objective? To make these primary source documents available not just to the participating colleges but to anyone interested in women's issues surrounding "political reform and women's rights, sexuality and body image, religion, race and class."

These items document student experiences at the schools originally called the Seven Sisters: Wellesley, Bryn Mawr, Radcliffe College MA (now the Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study at Harvard University MA), Smith College MA, Mount Holyoke College MA, Vassar College NY and Barnard College NY. (Bryn Mawr is one of the group's smaller schools.) These schools educated the first generation of young women going to college.

Until the 1970s, well-to-do parents who sent their sons to the Ivy League schools of Harvard, Dartmouth College NH, Yale University CT, Brown University RI, the University of Pennsylvania, Princeton University NJ and Cornell University NY, sent their daughters to the Seven Sisters for a similar liberal arts experience. And like the Ivies, the Seven Sisters were initially set up as an athletic league.

## Archival work

**Dr. Jennifer Redmond**, the then-director of the Albert M. Greenfield Digital Center for the History of Women's Education at Bryn Mawr, led the project's initial discussions. **Dr. Monica Mercado**, a postdoc fellow at the college, later took over leadership of the Greenfield Center and joined the discussions, which coincidentally were taking place as Virginia's Sweet Briar College was deciding its fate.

"The slice of women's education [the portal] is capturing is coming from women students who are prosperous and ambitious" in addition to being socially conscious, said **Eric Pumroy**, chief information officer and Seymour Adelman Director of Special Collections at Bryn Mawr.

The items will enable scholars to study just how women of those eras thought about their futures—for example, women's professional expectations in college during the early 20th century.

Receiving a \$39,650 one-year planning grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), Pumroy and his Bryn Mawr colleagues, **Christiana Dobrzynski**, college archivist, and Mercado, who is moving to a tenure-track position at Colgate University NY (but will remain as an advisory board member), began planning the portal in 2012. The planning grant enabled them to digitize 318 items, mostly photographs.

In 2014, the project received a \$260,000 grant from the NEH to continue and expand upon its work.

Other women's colleges are using their archives to look at the history of women in science or for a different focus. This portal will focus solely on women and their educational experiences.

## A snapshot of women students at Bryn Mawr

Not interested in the administrative-driven memorabilia or published items such as literary magazines, the portal is very much student-centered. It will feature items created by students for their own memories or for an audience of their friends. These items are often the ones discarded in a fit of housekeeping later in life.

"It's an illustrative example [that] they were human beings cultivating their own communities," said Dobrzynski. The materials are creating a richer context about relationships. "We just got a collection of letters from a student whose aunt attended Bryn Mawr from the 1920s," said Mercado. "She kept her aunt's papers and needed some place to go with them."

"Most of those who were creating the letters weren't thinking that they were being saved and other people would see them," said Dobrzynski.

"Part of the reason they're valuable is that they don't get saved," said Pumroy.

## The portal's uses

Mercado, who has taught classes on U.S. women's history and the history of women and education using some of the material, acknowledged that the visual material is "surprising" to some of her current students. "One hundred fifty years ago is such a different time, but some things feel very similar to them," she said. It helps that most of the colleges are still operating out of the same buildings that they were 150 years ago.

Coming from the college archivist perspective, Dobrzynski values the portal for its link to the alumnae. She has heard from some who have seen the initial postings. "They didn't recognize the inherent value of their individual stories and how stories in the aggregate matter," she said. "There is a visceral connection that alumnae and current students feel to these materials."

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*There's no denying that women's colleges have played a vital role in our nation's political and social history long before women were able to vote.*

# Brown Encourages Us to Rise Through Vulnerability

A couple years ago, a colleague shared Brené Brown's popular TED Talk "The Power of Vulnerability" on Twitter. The title caught me off guard. It seemed to run counter to my experience of the world: vulnerability appeared as fragility and weakness, while emotional stoicism was a preferred strength.

Hastily, I clicked on the link for the talk. I wanted to know how vulnerability (and all those stubborn emotions I've attempted to downplay, hide and ignore over the years) could be strengths and not weaknesses.

As I watched the video, it was almost as if the earth tilted underneath me. Brown, a self-described researcher and storyteller, had the data and the stories to prove everything I thought I knew about vulnerability and emotion was wrong. I couldn't help but listen to her.

Brown's latest, *Rising Strong* (Spiegel & Grau 2015), is about what happens to us when we fall, falter or fail. We all face rejection, heartbreak, disappointment and loss. We all have to figure out how to get back up and dust ourselves off after a fall. Vulnerability is the key to rising after a fall.

## Settling into our vulnerability

Brown's message on the importance of vulnerability, for both being your authentic self as well as showing up for your own life, resonated with me. Of course, I'm not the only one.

With over 25 million views, her talk is the fourth most popular TED Talk. Three of her books were number-one *New York Times* best-sellers. Currently, she's a research professor at the University of Houston TX Graduate College of Social Work and the CEO of The Daring Way and Courage Works, an online learning community for organizations and individuals to live braver lives.

According to Brown, vulnerability is "the willingness to show up and be seen with no guarantee of the outcome." Being vulnerable emerges as the key to having a life full of joy, love and belonging.

But, it doesn't guarantee a life without rejection, failure or heartbreak. Suffering cannot be so easily avoided.

Brown writes, "You're going to stumble, fall, and get your ass kicked." What *Rising Strong* shows is that how we respond to life's hurts is just as important as being brave and being mindful of our own lives. How we rise after a fall tells us the most about who we are.

## Emotions and vulnerability

Through years of research, Brown uncovered a pattern about wholehearted people, those with strong relationships, deep connections with parents or children, compassion and trust. All of these people had in common that they realized the power of emotion and leaned into discomfort rather than avoiding it.

I come from a family of people who are profoundly unsure about emotions, try to avoid feelings and scatter from the room when someone gets *emotional*.

"What are you crying about?" was a regular refrain of my childhood. It was not so much a question as a denial that there were actually good reasons to cry.

Since I often did get emotional, some members of my family described me as sensitive or, even worse, high-maintenance. My emotions emerged as a problem that others didn't suffer from. I learned the hard way to keep them in check or deal with the consequences.

The people in Brown's research did not disengage or numb their feelings. They got curious about how they felt and tried to figure it out. They knew how to sit with discomfort and how to let it motivate them.

What Brown wants readers to do is recognize the hurt and fear that failure causes. Failures, even the smallest ones, hurt us. Rather than sanitizing our stories of failure to make them inspirational, we have to admit that falling is painful and that the "death of our expectations" wounds us too.

She writes that "scars are easier to talk about than they are to show, with all the remembered feelings laid bare. And rarely do we see wounds that are in the process of healing."

In addition to her subjects' stories, Brown shows us her wounds and her reactions to them. She doesn't shy away from shame or hurt.

What becomes clear is that trying to avoid emotions doesn't help us, but rather convinces us to ignore the harder parts of our lives. To show up for our own lives, we have to own our stories, especially the painful ones that we attempt to avoid.

## The stories we tell ourselves

Over and over again, Brown urges readers to own their stories and live their truths. Relying on writer Anne Lamott's idea of the "shitty [sic] first draft" (SFD), Brown recommends narrating a particular fall or failure.

Write down what happened and how you felt. This is just a first draft, a first pass at understanding how you reacted to what you experienced.

You have to be honest. Describe how you really feel, even if it makes you look like a jerk. (Brown notes that your SFD is probably the most honest when you appear as a tantrmy toddler.)

Being honest about our feelings is the first step in learning how we respond to failure. We need to know how we respond to falls to learn how to avoid self-loathing and the interrogation of our self-worth.

We have to be honest about the stories we tell ourselves about our struggles. What this requires is getting curious about what happened, figuring out the truth, deciding whether we are self-protecting and learning what needs to change to move forward.

Avoiding difficult stories to appear whole or "normal" actually backfires. Brown explains that we have to integrate all of our experiences (the disappointments, difficulties and falls) to live wholehearted lives.

*continued on page 15*

*What  
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shows is that how we  
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we are.*

## How We Fail, How We Succeed

This spring, **Dr. Johannes Haushofer**, an assistant professor at Princeton University NJ, shared on his professional website what he called his CV of Failures, and it went viral. It included such failures as not getting a job at Harvard University MA or the University of California, Berkeley, as well as a number of fellowships and funding opportunities.

As he says in the introduction to his CV of Failures, “Most of what I try fails, but these failures are often invisible, while the successes are visible. I have noticed that this sometimes gives others the impression that most things work out for me.”

It should be noted that all of his failed job searches occurred in 2014, the same year he started his position at Princeton; therefore, he seemingly only spent one year on the academic job market, which resulted in a tenure-track job at a prestigious institution.

While making failure visible and thus more socially acceptable, particularly in academia, we should recognize that failure in academia is still a taboo topic. The narrative we write about ourselves is one of past success leading to future success: more grants, more publications, tenure, awards, prestige.

### A history of failure

Haushofer points to the 2010 “A CV of Failures” by **Dr. Melanie Stefan**, then a postdoc in neurobiology at Cal Tech, that appeared in *Nature*. She, rightly, points out that the bulk of a scientist’s work is spent on failing enterprises: grants not won, experiments gone wrong, papers rejected by prestigious journals.

“I talk about the one project that worked, not about the many that failed,” Stefan says. “As scientists, we construct a narrative of success that renders our setbacks invisible both to ourselves and to others.”

Stefan also realizes the privilege of being able to be open about one’s failures: “If you dare—and can afford to—make it public.” It should be noted that she herself in the short piece only shares one failure, not a complete CV of failures, a reflection of her own tenuous stage as an early-career researcher.

### “Only successful people can afford a CV of failure”

What Stefan hints at, others, in their reactions to the most recent CV of Failures by Haushofer, make explicit. While social media generally praised him for his bravery and transparency, as well as calling him “inspirational,” others rightly pointed out that that same stream of positive reactions would not be heaped upon them if they had published their own Failure CVs.

Sonia Sodha, writing in *The Guardian*, says, “I think it would be more useful for successful people to write a ‘CV of good fortune’” because it “would contain more hard truths about how the world works.” On *The Chronicle of Higher Education’s Vitae* website, **Dr. Natalie T.J. Tindall** observes, “For many of us, however, admitting any shortcoming can be the

Judas kiss to a tenure file, a promising career trajectory, or a well-maintained, well-curated professional identity.”

Thus, Tindall advises young academics in precarious positions: “Discuss your shortcomings—but only with people you trust.”

**Dr. David Perry** voices a concern shared by Sodha and others: “I worry that failure narratives push academics to blame themselves for not pulling themselves up by their bootstraps, to keep them in abusive or exploitative positions in the hopes that if they just work harder, success will follow.”

Many also shared on social media how failures have helped them improve themselves and their work, and sometimes even, in the case of fellow *WIHE* writer **Dr. Kelly J. Baker**, that academia isn’t the career path they wanted anymore.

### How and When We Talk About Failure

Tindall makes another point about the ways we talk about failure: “Be purposeful about it. Don’t disclose just to commiserate. Do it to get constructive feedback. If you want to go public later in your career, after your CV can speak to your triumphs, that’s OK.”

There is a fine line in discussing failure, especially when success hasn’t yet been achieved; it can be seen as whining, blaming or a reflection of how you deserve to fail because of your negative attitude.

Particularly challenging are those in contingent academic positions, and thus (according to academia) not yet a success, or rather, a failure. To speak publicly about the frustrations, the inequities, the crushing disappointment and economic precariousness is to invite the ire of the academic internet.

Comments about the worth and talent of the academic and their level of grit and resiliency, as well as general dismissiveness of the very real structural barriers, are the common and expected reactions to these posts.

Compare the reactions to Haushofer’s CV of Failures to **Dr. Rebecca Schuman’s** “Thesis Hatment” that appeared on Slate in 2013. Schuman’s piece, at its core, was also about failure: failure to secure a tenure-track job.

Not only was Schuman’s piece subjected to the kinds of comments outlined above (and worse), but she was also taken to task for the *tone* of the piece itself, filled with anger and vitriol at a broken system that chewed her up and spit her out.

Schuman’s story didn’t have a happy, successful, academic ending like Haushofer’s; instead, it ended with her leaving academia. The very public sharing of her failure, and the subsequent criticism, highlights an important gap in how different kinds of failure narratives are received by the academy.

That she published this particular failure narrative in a mainstream media outlet was also problematic, exposing the structural shortcomings of academia to a wider

*As women, we are expected to be humble and grateful, not boastful, or to engage in self-promotion.*

(although no less hostile) audience.

### **Intersectionality and failure**

The larger structural issues Schuman, Tindall, Perry and Sodha address implicitly and explicitly impact how academia (and society as a whole) will receive conversations around failure.

A study from the Harvard Kennedy School of Public Policy shows that women leaders are judged more harshly and suffer consequences more frequently for making mistakes than their male counterparts. To talk about failures, then, is to invite the ire of their superiors and colleagues.

Women in leadership roles also face the confluence and confusion of personal failings and professional failings.

In a *Harvard Business Review* piece, Marianne Cooper does a meta-analysis of studies showing that “high-achieving women experience social backlash because their very success—and specifically the behaviors that created that success—violates our expectations about how women are supposed to behave.” Women, then, can’t behave the same way as men, even when successful, and expect the same treatment.

This phenomenon in particular is reflected in the work done on student evaluations of professors, with women, African-American women in particular, receiving harsher evaluations based not on their competency, but instead on what the students see as personal failings: how they dressed, how they spoke (tone) and how they interacted with the students.

The research collective HASTAC recently published an annotated bibliography of such studies on their website, and it clearly shows the disproportionate and unequal standards women and visible minorities are held to within academia.

Finally (but certainly not exhaustively), the impact of a failure narrative can be unevenly distributed according to racialized and classist markers of the writer. Often these failure narratives can, as observed above, upset the “bootstraps” mentality and success narratives that academia specifically and society more generally subscribe to.

In her recent piece in *Elle* on failure, Melissa Harris-Perry reflects on the internal and external pressures in failing, and failing publicly: “When former viewers tell me how much they miss the show ... on those days I feel the sting of failure.”

When you are a beacon of success, then the failure seems to weigh more heavily because of unfulfilled, if misplaced, expectations. In a racialized or classist or gendered position, those failures can also be expanded to represent the failures or shortcomings of the entire group.

### **When we succeed**

And here is the double-edged sword of not talking about failure is how we talk about success. As women, we are expected to be humble and grateful, not boastful, or to engage in self-promotion. It shouldn’t be radical for a feminist academic blog such as Hook and Eye to create a series of “Boast Posts” for their writers and readers to celebrate their victories and successes large and small, but it was, and still remains, one of their most-visited features.

As a blogger, my most controversial posts (if the comments are to be believed) were those where I was self-promotional, and in the post “Shameless Self-Promotion”


as part of my “Bad Female Academic” series. To celebrate and embrace this side of my success was rejected quite readily and aggressively, because it was unbecoming of both a woman *and* an academic.

Race also complicates how success is received. A meta-analysis published by the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology looks at the impact of the perception of affirmative action on workplace relationships, and notes that those who appear to have benefited are judged more harshly, and negatively impact workplace relationships. Success, then, isn’t even seen as success for certain groups.

Roxane Gay, in an essay about her success, reflects on “success, ambition, and blackness and how breaking through while black is tempered by so much burden.” She reminds us we “should not only measure black progress by the most visibly successful among us, but also by those who continue to be left behind.”

### **Mentorship and support**

What can be done? In both the research and the personal narratives shared in response to the most recent Failure CV, it is clear that strong mentorship and support is key to overcoming these structural inequities.

When people in positions of authority work to alleviate these barriers while working to create more inclusive environments where both success and failures are treated fairly and equally, then there can be space for more of us to be successful. 

—LSB

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## **MOVEABLE TYPE: Use Your Whole Brain for Workplace Success and Harmony,** *continued from page 7*

bodies: “Thanks for that approach but I don’t like the way it feels. I’m going to choose a different path now.”

By first noticing our loops, we can next begin to choose new ones, rather than operating from blind habit. What loops are you stuck in at work?

### **Take your time**

You will marvel at Taylor’s description of the passage of time during her stroke and how long it took her to be able to call for help. When the right brain is in charge, time works differently, or perhaps better put, there is no time. There is only the now of the present moment.

The left brain is where our sequential concepts of time as past, present and future are born. In our busy left-brain world, the right brain often doesn’t have enough time to do its job.

To utilize the full potential of your whole brain, set aside time each day to just be. You may find your being time consists of prayer or meditation. It might also just be silence or breath. The left brain will initially admonish you for not “doing something.” Thank it and carry on with just being.

If you are heavily left-brain-reliant, this will feel like trying to write your name with your nondominant hand ... at first. But with practice, you’ll come to value this time and reap its rewards.

If you have a big presentation coming up, take time for both left- and right-brain preparation. Your left-brain prep might consist of research, list-making and organizing mate-

rials. Your right-brain time will look much different as you focus on letting go and settling into a state of relaxation and flow. Both are critical to your success.

### Become energy-aware

Taylor discusses the importance of bedside manner to her recovery. Because her right brain is very connected to non-verbal experiences and the interaction of energy, she notices that some of her caregivers leave her feeling drained while others give her a sense of peace and motivation. She goes as far as to describe one of her nurses as an “energy vampire.”

Taylor discovers she has a positive reaction when treated positively. When treated negatively or even neutrally, she shuts down to protect herself in her heightened vulnerability.

When you tune into your right brain, you can begin to notice the energy involved in your interactions in the workplace and beyond. Ask yourself who is giving and who is taking energy in all of your interactions.

At one time in my career, I was very left-brain-reliant. I can remember sitting down to meetings without exchanging any pleasantries and diving right into a discussion of whether or not outcomes had been met. In short, I took all the energy in the room and gave none back.

Consider making a point to begin each interaction with staff and students alike with an offering of positive energy while also being wary of encounters where you aren't receiving any energy in return.

What I'm left with after reading *My Stroke of Insight* is a feeling of empowerment. A friend of mine going through some lifestyle changes recently texted me and said, “Change is so hard.” But with a deeper understanding of the functions and gifts of the brain, both left and right, it seems all the more possible. 📖

Karen Costa has over a decade of experience in both student and academic affairs, in both administrative and teaching capacities. She is currently an adjunct professor teaching online learning strategies to first-year students. She is also a writer, avid reader and certified yoga teacher. Connect with her on Twitter: [@KarenRayCosta](https://twitter.com/KarenRayCosta).

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### Women Coaches Learn Nuances of Networking at Leadership Forum,

*continued from page 10*

Lastly, a common thread and goal participants bring to these forums is to connect with each other across sports. The Alliance promotes it, not only to create dialog about job openings, but also to foster a flow of information and support.

“We want women coaches to network across the board in all sports so that they can learn from each other and be vulnerable without that threat of being vulnerable about something you're struggling with to somebody you're competing against,” says Bjornsrud. “We talk about those feelings of isolation.”

At times, coaches want quick hits of inspiration and information. The Alliance of Women Coaches is also producing virtual content—most notably, the recently launched Take 10 Talks. These are easily accessed 10-minute educational videos that cover a variety of subjects. 📖

—LE

### Online Portal Showcases Women's College Experiences,

*continued from page 11*

The cutoff of the early 20th century (pre-World War II) is a practical one. Copyright and privacy issues are non-existent with the earlier dates. “We don't want to be putting up letters of people who are still alive or those who they are writing about who are still alive,” said Pumroy.

The portal is currently outsourced at Amazon. Once the site is sustainable, its open-source format will enable it to expand to include the archives of other women's colleges.

For specific details on the planning process and technology used, check out the white paper at [http://repository.brynmawr.edu/lib\\_pubs/17/](http://repository.brynmawr.edu/lib_pubs/17/). 📖

—MLS

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### Brown Encourages Us to Rise Through Vulnerability,

*continued from page 12*

#### Guide to trust

What I appreciate most about *Rising Strong* is the focus on how we treat ourselves and the other people in our lives. Brown tells us that we have to learn how to be responsible for our own well-being and ask for what we need and want.

Compassion requires that we know our boundaries and stick to them. Self-compassion leads to more compassion for the people around us.

When we learn not to judge ourselves harshly, we are less likely to judge others. When we feel good about ourselves, we see the good in our partners, children, parents, siblings, friends, colleagues, co-workers and strangers.

Brown encourages us to be generous in our assumptions about other people, but also maintain the boundaries we need to function. Compassion and well-defined boundaries keep us away from resentment.

To be vulnerable and own our stories, we have to learn to trust ourselves and others. Brown lays out her guide to trust with the acronym BRAVING:

- **Boundaries.** Be clear about what's okay and what's not. Be willing to say no.

- **Reliability.** Do what you say you will. At work especially, know your limitations and abilities. Don't overpromise.

- **Accountability.** Own mistakes. Apologize.

- **Vault.** Don't share stories that aren't yours to share.

- **Integrity.** Practice your values. Choose courage over comfort. Do what is right rather than easy.

- **Nonjudgment.** Ask for what you need. Allow other people to do this too. Don't pass judgment.

- **Generosity.** Give the most generous assumption to the words and actions of other people.

“Leaning in to vulnerability and emotion” can change not only our relationships, but also our professional lives. Vulnerability is a strength, and I'm learning how to embrace it. I hope you will too. *Rising Strong* shows us how to. 📖

—KJB

## Write It Down, Bring It With Me

I love notebooks. Well, I love words in general, but I love notebooks. I'm especially fond of the pretty "journals" you see at a bookstore or paper store. They make it seem like my words are precious and sacred.

I'm an editor, sure, but the editor appreciates words and likes to write them down throughout the day. I find comfort in my notebooks. They are with me whenever I need a place to put my words, my thoughts.

I carry my notebooks with me. They make my big purse heavier, even though the purse is heavy to begin with. But I carry them with me because I always think I may need to write something; what if I don't have my notebook with me? I make an exception for dates ... but don't think I haven't tried to bring my writing with me on a date.

### Current set-up

I currently have three notebooks I carry with me

I have a BASICS notebook planner. I was using it a lot the first half of the year but then I found there was a lot of white space I wasn't using. Although I like the space at the top where I can attach my pen (see picture above), I'm not sure if I'll buy it again because of the white-space problem.

I also carry a black Moleskine, the notebook all my writer friends love. I prefer the unruled (or plain) page Moleskines, but those seem to be harder to find. For now, this one says MoMA—Museum of Modern Art—on the front, and it's like carrying a little piece of New York with me.

This journal keeps my secrets and my drama contained. The Moleskine is for my morning pages, Julia Cameron's strategy for unlocking creativity where you write three pages every morning. This one sometimes stays at home if I've already done my morning pages by the time I leave the house.

The third notebook I carry is a plain notebook I bought at a local bookstore. I've been using it as my bullet journal since this summer. "Bullet journal" is not necessarily the notebook per se but a way of organizing the notebook, created by Ryder Carroll.

In order for the bullet journal to work, it should be a plain notebook so that one can build the system that works best. The system is built out of topics, page numbers, brief sentences and bullets. The bullets easily categorize the sentences as a note, an event or a task, and one can continue to add different symbols for other purposes.

### Rotate notebooks

I used to carry a notebook for my creative writing. Usually I use a notebook I have used for my creative writing classes. But nowadays I prefer to just type up the

creative writing into Evernote or Scrivener, so it is readily accessible for me when I need to start writing.

I also had a notebook for book thoughts. I stopped using that one because I found myself writing little and not going back to review my ideas. Not only that, but I also kept adding the book ideas to Evernote instead of the notebook and ended up wasting paper.

I also have a notebook I only carry at academic conferences (when I'm not covering them for *WIHE*) and a notebook for my teacher training days. These are notebooks that are subject-specific, so if I have to look up anything in that area, I will go to these notebooks.

However, I usually keep it to three.

### What's all the fuss about?

Why three? Because I love to write and I feel like I need to keep different kinds of writing in different places. But it's not an efficient system, I know. I've been considering using one notebook to rule them all, especially as I prepare to go back into teaching in the fall.

I recently went to a time and task management workshop for teachers, and imagine my surprise when they brought out free notebooks for all of those present. The idea was that we would use the notebooks to plan the beginning of the semester.

I was thrilled because, well, I never need an excuse to get new notebooks. And I was eager to implement their suggestions for time and task management! But this notebook felt odd. Was I abandoning my notebook, my trusted system, for this new shiny model?

I've been thinking, as the beginning of the K-12 school year nears, should I cave and go with the big notebook they gave me? Or should I continue to keep my professional and personal lives as separate as my notebooks?

### Too much?

Maybe the clutter of notebooks is an indication of a bigger problem: am I compartmentalizing my projects? Is that why I am running out of (mental) space for projects? If I consolidate notebooks, what does that say about the different projects that make up my brain?

Maybe I've been splitting up my energy for too long. Maybe I've been trying too hard to split myself up in different directions. Maybe it's time to admit to myself that I can't do all of the things.

So I'm going to think about what my new notebook system will be moving forward. I may need to put away the planner I have and just commit to a bullet journal ... along with my digital calendar on my phone and laptop. 📅

Till next month,  
LMS



My current notebooks

*I carry  
[my notebooks] with  
me because I always think  
I may need to write something;  
what if I don't have my  
notebook with me?*