

Introduction: At the faculty meeting of October 5, 2011, during discussion of the President's remarks on the ROTC report, some faculty asked for more information from the minority who disagreed with the report's third recommendation. This recommendation is that the President engage in conversations with the Department of Defense to explore expanding Brown ROTC options to services above and beyond the current Army arrangement with Providence College ROTC. The President asked whether the minority would be willing to release a memo it had written her after the report was submitted.

We had not contemplated making this memo public, but given these requests, we are willing to allow its circulation, with the following introductory provisos.

We ask that this memo to the president not be considered as if it were a full and formal "minority report," but rather comments on certain aspects of the final report. The four signees of this memo had both different and overlapping reasons for dissenting from the third recommendation, including some that are not mentioned in the memo. Furthermore, we believe that the final ROTC report represents a good faith effort to include a variety of arguments on all sides. However, we did feel that there are some key elements of our concerns not fully represented as matters of emphasis or substance in the final report. Given that, unless repealed, the federal legislation pertaining to ROTC would make it next to impossible for Brown to reverse a decision to expand its relationship with the program, we thought it important to highlight our concerns so that the President could take them into account fully in her decision.

August 3rd, 2011

To: Ruth Simmons, President

From: Leslie Bostrom, Professor of Visual Art
Catherine Lutz, Professor of Anthropology and Research Professor, Watson Institute
Philip Rosen, Professor of Modern Culture and Media
Sean Dinces, Ph.D. Candidate in American Studies

CC: Katherine Bergeron, Dean of the College

Subj: "Report of the Committee on the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC)"

The purpose of this memorandum is to express our concerns about certain aspects of the "Report of the Committee on the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC)," submitted at the end of June 2011 by the Dean of the College. This was a hard-working committee, led most ably by Dean Bergeron. We very much appreciate the Dean's willingness during the drafting process to discuss the shape and contents of the report with all members of the committee, including ourselves, and to consider and use input from us to the report that you have. However, we also

believe that some key elements of our concerns were not fully represented, as matter of substance or emphasis, in the final version. We wish to highlight the following points, and urge you to take them into account:

- As the report notes, a direct conflict exists between Brown's anti-discrimination policy and Department of Defense regulations prohibiting transgender individuals from serving in the military. Brown's anti-discrimination policy includes protection against discrimination on the basis of "gender identity" and "gender expression." Department of Defense Instruction 6103.03 clearly mandates the exclusion of transgender individuals from the United States Armed Forces. We learned, incidentally, that this differentiates U.S. military policy from several other advanced militaries in the world, such as those of Australia, Britain and Israel, where transgender people serve. At Brown, it would also mean that transgender members of campus would be excluded from any benefits of expanded ROTC participation. The report calls this conflict a moral issue, as it is for many. However, we believe it is also an institutional issue, about the seriousness of our non-discrimination policy, and the nature of our university community.
- The report notes that this conflict was of serious concern to the entire committee, but it does not review the debates within the committee. For example, one extensive debate was around a motion to recommend that Brown not consider expanding or modifying its relationship with ROTC until the DOD transgender policy is changed to be in accord with Brown's non-discrimination policy. (This would parallel what came to be the de facto university policy on "Don't Ask, Don't Tell," repeal of which was listed as a motivation for reconsidering our ROTC relationship.) This motion was defeated by the narrowest of margins (6-4) and several in the majority agreed with the minority that this is a significant problem for Brown. We were all supporters of this motion, and ask you to give it serious consideration.
- The surveys conducted to gauge alumni and student sentiment receive significant space in the final report. As the report acknowledges a couple of times, these were unscientific, opt-in polls, perhaps best understood as vehicles for expression of sentiment, often from those previously interested in the issues. They were not based on random samples from defined populations, with mathematically calculated margins of error, and do not have social-scientific validity. We wish this had been emphasized even more in the report, and we worry that, when the report is released, BDH and other media interest may be drawn to the numbers, which are extensively elaborated and presented, without any serious qualifications. We ask that you take this methodological weakness into account when factoring the surveys into your decision.
- We note that, in the committee's efforts to become better educated on the ROTC issue, we made efforts to learn about the specific characteristics of ROTC training on and off campus. However, we were not successful in acquiring much detailed information about the content of ROTC courses. For example, when meeting with the commander of the Providence College ROTC Battalion, he refused a request for sample course syllabi, stating that ROTC syllabi are different among different instructors, and that he saw no benefit to sharing his own syllabi. It is true that the report assumes that any ROTC

presence would be extracurricular, so that syllabi presumably would not be subject to the usual checks and standards. However, this lack of information not only impeded the committee's effort to make an informed assessment, but also raises the question of whether there will be conflict between the military's pursuit of its mission of officer training and the university's commitment to a culture of transparency and open dialogue.

- There also remains uncertainty regarding the specific financial and university space resources Brown would have to provide in order to expand its formal relationship with ROTC, as well as questions about officer's university titles and the possibility of admission preferences based on ROTC scholarships.

We thank you for your attention to our concerns in this important matter.

Sincerely,

Leslie Bostrom, Professor of Visual Art

Catherine Lutz, Professor of Anthropology and Research Professor, Watson Institute

Philip Rosen, Professor of Modern Culture and Media

Sean Dinces, Ph.D. Candidate in American Studies