

Creating Opportunities and Building Confidence: Clare Boothe Luce's Unexpected Support of Women in Math and Science

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ABSTRACT. How did a woman who was a playwright and a politician advance American women in mathematics and science? This paper explores the life of Clare Boothe Luce and her pioneering—and unexpected—impact on the development of mathematics and science.

Introduction

With her death in 1987 Clare Boothe Luce bequeathed nearly \$70 million¹ to establish a fund “to encourage women to enter, study, graduate and teach” in the fields of science, engineering, and mathematics. This decision seems an unlikely choice for a woman who, while alive, was widely known as a playwright, magazine editor, American ambassador to Italy, war correspondent, congresswoman, and wife of Henry Luce, who co-founded TIME Inc. Despite having no known connection to or interest in what are now STEM fields [Teltsch], Clare Boothe Luce challenged women to enter into and excel in more commonly male-dominated fields. Her vision established a foundation that has become “the most significant source of private support for women in science, math and engineering in the US [Grant Spotlight].”

The Clare Boothe Luce Program has supported more than 2300 women since awarding the first grants in 1989

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¹Roughly \$156 million in 2018 dollars.

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[The Clare Boothe Luce Program].² The 30th anniversary of the initial Clare Boothe Luce Fund awards provides a timely opportunity to reflect on the life of Clare, to consider her motivation in establishing this support, and to explore the impact of her funding on women and institutions.

Clare Boothe Luce: Life Experiences Shaping a Request

On March 10, 1903, in New York City, Clare, born Ann Clare Boothe, began her life as she would live it—surrounded by conflict and drama. Clare was the second illegitimate child of Ann Snyder (Anglicized from Anna Clara Schneider) and William Franklin Boothe [Morris, 1997, p. 15]. William Boothe was legally married to another woman at the time. Although he subsequently divorced his first wife in 1906, William and Ann Snyder never married. After his once successful piano business dwindled, he worked as a medical salesman and, finally, as a musician. In search of work, William’s musical career took the family to various cities, including Memphis, Nashville, and Chicago. Money grew increasingly scarce with each move. As William’s financial resources faded, so did Ann’s affection for him. She had met him as a flourishing executive and now he was an

²Interestingly, nearly twenty years before her death, Clare proposed the idea of considering a woman for a (Henry) Luce Fellowship. Specifically, in 1968, when asked her opinion on a proposed Luce Fellowship Program at Time, Inc. Clare Boothe Luce wrote mostly about “the man” or “him” in this position. Near the end of the letter, however, she dared to suggest, “Sooo—is there anything in the idea of a Time Inc. Associates Program, among whom, hopefully, the Board of Selection might annually choose a man, or woman (please!) worthy to be dubbed a Luce Fellow...” [Clare Boothe Luce to Andrew Heiskell, February 4, 1968, p. 8, Clare Boothe Luce papers, my emphasis].

aging musician with too few prospects and too much of a drinking habit. Ann Snyder wanted more for her children and for herself. When Ann's father suffered a serious illness in September 1912, she took the opportunity to move her children to her parents' home in New Jersey. She eventually told acquaintances she was a widow. With the death of Ann's father in 1913, the family relocated to New York City [Morris, 1997, p. 39].

This transient lifestyle proved challenging for Clare. She had a difficult time making friends, a situation that would not improve in her lifetime. Clare spent two years at the Cathedral School of St. Mary's in Garden City, Long Island, where some students viewed her as "the most conceited girl in the school [Morris, 1997, p. 57]." Clare felt she would never succeed at St. Mary's, so she appealed to her mother to let her leave. Clare's mother subsequently enrolled her at the Castle School above Tarrytown-on-Hudson in New York. This move was intended to put Clare in a better position to find a suitable husband rather than earn a college degree. At the Castle, although Clare won the school's titles of "Most Artistic," "Cleverest," and "Prettiest," she finished second for "Most Ambitious," the only award she felt she truly deserved. As she expressed it in her diary, "[m]y whole heart and soul is wrapt [sic] up in three things: Mother, Brother and my ambition for success [Clare Boothe Luce Diary, February 6, 1919, as quoted in Morris, 1997, p. 61]."

Clare's drive for success remained with her throughout her life. She decided the best route to success was through marriage, and, in particular, marriage to a wealthy man. As she put it in a letter to a friend, "Damned if I'll ever love any mere man. Money! I need it and the power it brings, and someday you shall hear my name spoken of as—famous [Clare Boothe Luce to Ruth B. Morton, November 18, 1921, as quoted in Morris, 1997, p. 99]."³ True to her word, Clare loved one man, but married another. At the age of twenty, she married George Tuttle Brokaw, a millionaire alcoholic more than twice her age who simultaneously doubled as New York's most eligible bachelor [Morris, 2014].

Four months after the wedding, Clare learned she was pregnant. Although she tried scalding hot baths as a way to induce an abortion, the child lived and Ann Clare Brokaw was born in 1924. The baby helped the marriage temporarily but could not save a marriage damaged from the start. Clare plotted how to exit the marriage "with minimum damage and the maximum amount of money [Morris, 1997, p. 140]." When Clare and Brokaw amicably divorced in May, 1929,⁴ Clare received a settlement of a \$425,000 trust fund, an annual income, and expenses for Ann. Following a difficult custody battle, each parent was allotted six months a year with Ann. For all its faults, the marriage

provided Clare with plenty of money and an increased social confidence. Although "she had ample means to settle for the life of a socialite" after her divorce from Brokaw, she chose, instead, to "capitalize on her own abilities in the workplace [Morris, 2014, p. 29]."

In an attempt to give her life new direction and meaning, Clare interviewed for a position at *Vogue* magazine. After waiting all summer to hear from the magazine, Clare self-assuredly walked into the *Vogue* building and convinced an office assistant that she was a new employee. Soon enough, colleagues gave the new beautiful, professional woman sitting at an empty desk work to do. *Vogue's* editor, Edna Woolman Chase, thought the publisher of the magazine, Condé Nast, had hired Clare. Nast, in turn, thought Chase had brought her on board the magazine's staff [Morris, 2014]. Clare received her first paycheck after one month [Morris, 1997, p. 163]. Consequently, with no formal education or experience in writing, Clare secured a job with one of the most popular magazines of the time. She soon moved down the hall to *Vanity Fair* with the title of Junior Editor. Her first piece "Talking Up—and Thinking Down: How to Be a Success in Society Without Saying a Single Word of Much Importance" appeared in 1930 [Clare Boothe Luce, "Talking Up"]. In this article, Clare encouraged readers to be conventional, predictable, safe, and even boring in order to have a successful conversation. She identified the six topics guaranteed to start a conversation: golf, the stock market, prohibition, theater, gossip, and current social activities [Clare Boothe Luce, "Talking Up," p. 39].

After the 1929 stock market crash, *Vanity Fair* struggled to adjust to the new economic conditions. Advertising revenues, for example, dropped twenty percent [Morris, 1997, p. 181]. Clare helped reestablish *Vanity Fair* as a serious magazine concerned with issues beyond the scope of fashion. Her confidence grew with the success of her public-affairs articles. She earned a promotion to associate editor. She used her candor and satire to develop her skills as a political writer. This work led her to the 1932 Democratic National Convention in Chicago, where she met Bernard Baruch, an advisor to Franklin D. Roosevelt and the fourth richest man in America. Baruch introduced Clare to many of the nation's most powerful and prominent men.

With her increasing success, Clare began to take some liberties at *Vanity Fair*. She requested weeks off for personal travel. When in the office, she often arrived late or left early. She produced fewer articles [Morris, 1997, p. 227]. Consequently, Condé Nast expressed concern over her schedule. He also questioned her ability to successfully balance her roles as an editor and author along with her

³As Gore Vidal pointed out more than 75 years later, Clare expressed these thoughts fifteen years before Scarlett O'Hara leapt to and out of the pages of *Gone With the Wind* [Vidal, p. 208].

⁴Between 1867 and 1967, the Census Bureau measured the divorce rate by the number of divorces for every 1000 people in the population. In 1929, the rate was 1.7. See 100 Years of Marriage and Divorce Statistics, 1867–1967.

recent aspirations to become a playwright. These circumstances prompted Clare to leave *Vanity Fair* and begin work as an independent writer. She tried short stories using her trademark satire but found her best work as a playwright. After a few unsuccessful plays, she published *The Women* in 1936 [Luce, *Women*]. *The Women* featured a group of New York's wealthiest idle women whose concerns focused on their physical appearance and the town's latest gossip. Clare worked her progressive views into the play with a conversation between the protagonist and her daughter:

Child: "What fun is there to be a lady? What can a lady do?"

Mother: "These days, ladies do all the things men do. They fly aeroplanes across the ocean, they go into politics and business [Luce, *Women*, p. 23]."

The play opened on Broadway on December 26, 1936 and reached capacity by the end of its fourth week. It ran for 657 performances in the US and 18 countries and grossed over 2 million dollars. The success of *The Women* and two other plays not only established Clare as a talented comedic writer but it also allowed her to embody the life of the modern career woman and encourage others to do the same.

Through her writing, Clare met Henry Robinson Luce, the once humble newspaper reporter on the *Chicago Daily News* now turned publishing magnate with his *Time*, *Fortune*, and *Life* magazines. Harry Luce divorced his wife of 11 years and married Clare in 1935. The marriage lasted 32 years but was not without its challenges. In his *New York Times* obituary, Alvin Krebs suggested that the "rumored difficulties" were "perhaps inevitable in a marriage between two such strongminded personalities [Krebs]."

Although Harry provided Clare with sufficient opportunities to enhance her writing career, Clare now hoped to develop her skills as a politician. In the late 1930s she traveled to Europe to observe political events firsthand. Harry joined her for part of the trip. When she returned to the States, she hastily wrote a nonfiction book titled *Europe in the Spring* to express what she called an eye- and ear-witness report of what she saw [Luce, *Europe in the Spring*]. Her book helped shape public opinion in the US as Americans tried to make sense of the growing crisis in Europe. After the outbreak of war, she accepted the position as War Correspondent for *Life* magazine and traveled again through Europe. These opportunities and her connections allowed Clare to segue into politics.

In 1942, she ran as a Republican in a largely Democratic constituency of the Connecticut district where she lived. She won by a very narrow margin. Women eager to elect the first congresswoman from Connecticut may have earned Clare her victory and she felt honored to fulfill this role. Clare acknowledged that socially established prejudices surrounding women in politics still existed, but she was eager to hold a position with (purportedly) equal opportunities for power and prestige. In Congress,



Figure 1. Congresswoman Clare Boothe Luce of Connecticut.

Clare fought for the continued military strength of the US and she supported equal employment opportunities and racial equality. Of these interests, she prioritized the nation's safety and security above the "feminist issue [Morris, 2014, p. 30]." Clare, however, found it difficult to be taken seriously. While her male colleagues were often valued for their ideas or achievements, she found that female public figures were evaluated on their looks or personalities. As a Congresswoman then, Clare must have found herself at the confluence of the theoretical and the practical, fighting for women's rights while living the reality of a woman in Congress on a daily basis.

Clare felt pressure to succeed. As she put it, "because I am a woman I must make unusual efforts to succeed. If I fail no one will say, 'She doesn't have what it takes.' They will say, 'Women don't have what it takes [Martin, p. 306, Clare's emphasis].'"⁵ Clare grew tired of politics because she felt politicians were overly critical and never capable of admitting a mistake. She confessed, "I always regretted that I shifted to politics. You can do nothing truly creative

⁵Clare was inducted into the Connecticut Women's Hall of Fame in 1994 (posthumously). This quote is also featured on her biography page. See cwhf.org/inductees/politics-government-law/Clare-boothe-luce#.w5VyKq2ZPUo.

in politics by yourself [Martin, p. 272].” She continued in her position, however, because she felt she owed it to women to serve as a positive model of an ambitious and successful career woman.

In January 1944, tragedy struck and temporarily put Clare’s political frustrations aside. Her daughter, Ann, was killed in a car accident while traveling back to Stanford. Although they had something of a distant relationship, Clare was overcome with grief and regret for not spending more time with Ann. While a student at Stanford, Ann had “pined for her mother to write, telephone or visit. But Clare always had excuses [Morris, 2014, p. 45].” In July 1943, Ann had blamed herself for requesting Clare’s attention. “Forgive all my stupid little letters in which I normally ask you to write to me!” Ann wrote to Clare, “[s]omehow I always forget how very busy you are—and all the good you are doing—until I get a batch of clippings! Then it’s always a wonder to me how you even manage to survive the work you have to do.”⁶ When Clare did write to Ann, her affection for her daughter was everywhere apparent. On November 7, 1943, for example, Clare opened her letter with “Annie my pudding-cake, my peach pie, and all assorted delicacies [Morris, 2014, p. 57].” Initially, Clare’s grief seemed to propel her into more aggressive and combative types of politics and fueled her 1944 reelection campaign, which she won.

By September 1945, however, Ann’s death combined with discouraging world events led Clare to a point of despair [Luce, *The Real Reason*, April, 1947]. She called (in the middle of the night) a Jesuit priest in New York who had written to her over the years. He referred Clare to Monsignor (later Bishop) Fulton Sheen in Washington, DC. Father Sheen and Clare had several conversations over the course of the next several months and, on February 16, 1946, Clare converted to Catholicism.⁷ Since her Connecticut district had a very large Catholic vote, she did not want her newfound faith to be misconstrued as a political maneuver to influence her constituents. To avoid this confusion, two weeks before her conversion, Clare announced that she would not run for Congress again. This decision may have resolved the potential political issue associated with her newly adopted Catholicism, but no matter “how religious Clare became, the loss of Ann remained a persistent and tragic wound [Brenner, p. 164].”

After her two terms as a Congresswoman, she resumed her writing and suffered defeat in a Senate race in 1952. In 1953, Dwight D. Eisenhower appointed Clare ambassador

to Italy, the first woman to serve as an American envoy to a major country. The ambassadorship proved mutually beneficial to Clare and to the US. On the diplomatic front, Clare accomplished her three assigned tasks, including advancing the Italian-American friendship, helping to settle the Trieste crisis, and aiding the young democracy of Italy in fighting communism [Hatch, p. 237]. Gore Vidal later went so far as to credit Clare with “single-handedly saving Italy from Communism [Vidal, p. 203].” She retired after this appointment in 1956. She and Harry settled on their ranch in Arizona, although they still traveled extensively. Harry died unexpectedly of a heart attack in 1967. In his will, Harry had established a trust for Clare that paid her interest only, “the absolute minimum he could get away with without having the will challenged [Brenner, p. 166].” The trust would revert to the Henry Luce Foundation at the time of her death. Harry Luce’s son, Hank, however, allowed Clare to determine how she would like to use the trust.⁸

The Vision for the Awards: The Clare Boothe Luce Fund

With this freedom, Clare directed the majority of the proceeds of her Estate to support the Clare Boothe Luce Fund “dedicated exclusively to funding scholarships and professorships for women students and professors at educational institutions, a minimum 50% of which shall be Roman Catholic. The purpose of the Clare Boothe Luce Fund shall be to encourage women to enter, study, graduate, and teach in the following fields of endeavor: Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Meteorology, Engineering (Electrical, Mechanical, Aeronautical, Civil, Nuclear and other Engineering disciplines), Computer Science, and Mathematics [CBL Last Will and Testament, p. 12].” Her choice of scientific fields was deliberate. “I select such fields of endeavor in recognition that women today have already entered the fields of medicine, law, business and the arts, and in order to encourage more women to enter the fields of science [CBL Last Will and Testament, p. 12].” The awards were (and are) designated for scholarship and teaching in the US only.⁹

Just as Clare always hoped to accomplish more in life, she hoped other women would do the same. She would do her part to make this happen. By the time of her death in

⁶Ann Clare Brokaw to Clare Boothe Luce, July 7, 1943, as quoted in Morris, 2014, pp. 45–46.

⁷Hatch chronicles the conversations between Father Sheen and Clare on pp. 176–185. Clare documented her own journey to Catholicism in “*The Real Reason*,” an article that appeared in three installments in *McCall’s* magazine in February, March and April, 1947.

⁸The close relationship Hank developed with Clare is everywhere evident in his tribute to her in “*Clare Boothe Luce—Woman of the Century: A Son’s Tribute*,” *Crisis Magazine*, December 1, 1987. <https://www.crisismagazine.com/1987/clare-boothe-luce-woman-of-the-century-a-sons-tribute>.

⁹When responding to a query about an initial Visiting Assistant Professorship Program, Terrill Lautz, Program Officer of the Henry Luce Foundation, may have provided further insight into the overall aims of the still-to-be established Clare Boothe Luce Fund. “[T]he Luce Foundation wants to encourage the development of a permanent core of women faculty in fields where women have not been well represented in leadership positions at American universities [Lautz to Yu, 2 July, 1987].”

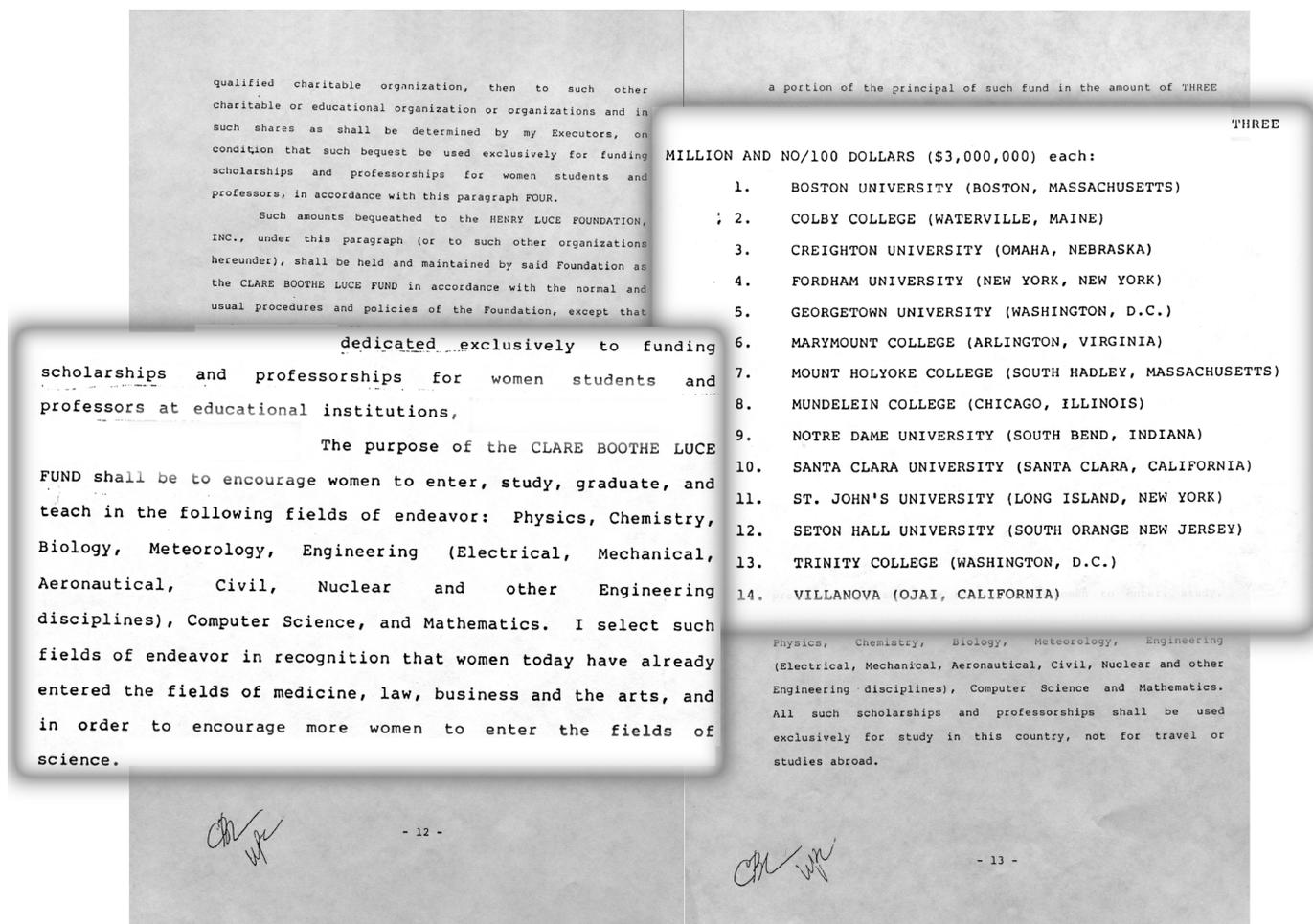


Figure 2. Pages 12–13 of Clare Boothe Luce's last will and testament, noting her wish to fund women in STEM studies and careers.

1987, Clare had seen women make significant advances in some fields, but not, from her perspective, in mathematics, engineering, and certain sciences. Even though these disciplines fell outside her own areas of expertise, she recognized the need for support and funding. A comment late in her life may offer insight into Clare's choice for her legacy. In 1981, she admitted to one of her biographers, Wilfred Sheed, that she envied Sandra Day O'Connor, America's first female Supreme Court justice. Although Clare was a woman of many "firsts" herself, she told Sheed, "I don't want to be her, I [would] just like to have had that kind of chance [Sheed, p. 163]." Her creation of the Clare Boothe Luce Fund provided women with a *chance*.

She also publicly recognized the three most important breakthroughs for women that could help them achieve equal opportunity: the legal process, the female contraceptive, and opportunities for higher education [Luce, "Women Superior to Men," p. 281]. She especially valued higher education. Since Clare had only a very limited formal education, she was thrilled to witness—and advance—new

opportunities for women in higher education. She was realistic, however. "Today she [a woman] is free to study for any 'masculine career' that her own ambition suggests" but... "as matters stand, her ambition is understandably dampened by the knowledge that even if she graduates at the top of her class, she will not find it easy to translate her well-earned degree into an upward-mobility job [Luce, 21st Century Woman, pp. 61–62]." Thus Clare understood that even though women had access to new educational opportunities, they still faced challenges in a male-dominated job market. Though Clare's success was not related to her level of education, she recognized that gender equality in education was a necessary precursor to job equality.

In her will, Clare designated "that the following named institutions shall be allocated a portion of the principal of such fund in the amount of...\$3,000,000 each (about \$6,692,000 today) [CBL Last Will and Testament, pp.12–13]." These schools included Boston University, Colby College, Creighton University, Fordham University, Georgetown University, Marymount College, Mount Holy-

oke College, Mundelein College, Notre Dame University, Santa Clara University, St. John's University (Long Island, NY), Seton Hall University, Trinity College (Washington, DC), and Villanova Preparatory School in Ojai California. [CBL Last Will and Testament, p. 13]. (Mundelein College affiliated with Loyola University Chicago in 1991 and is no longer funded from this initial allocation.) These fourteen schools had a Catholic affiliation, had awarded Clare an honorary degree, or had a sentimental attachment for her. Other schools can apply for funding through the "Clare Boothe Luce Program Invited Institution Competition." The Clare Boothe Luce Fund especially encourages Catholic institutions with strong science programs to apply [Clare Boothe Luce Program]. In 2017, by way of an example, eleven institutions received grants through the Invited Competition for funding to begin in 2018. Three decades after the initial bequest, in addition to the designated schools, more than 100 colleges and universities have benefited from the Clare Boothe Luce program [see CBL Recent Grants].

To fulfill Clare's aim "to encourage women to enter, study, graduate and teach," the Clare Boothe Luce Program administers awards in the three distinct categories of undergraduate scholarships and research awards; graduate fellowships for the first two years of a PhD program; and professorship support for the first five years of a tenure-track appointment. In the most recent year of funding for invited institutions, the Clare Boothe Luce Fund awarded grants in each of these categories [CBL Recent Grants].

Impact of a Designated Institution

Creighton University, one of the institutions designated in Clare's will, has a robust "Clare Boothe Luce Program for Women in Science [Creighton Clare Boothe Luce Program]." Through this program, Creighton funds undergraduate scholarships, graduate scholarships for women pursuing PhDs, and faculty positions. Since 1992, Creighton has rotated a Clare Boothe Luce Professorship in various fields in mathematics and science. Dr. Cynthia Farthing, who earned her PhD in mathematics from the University of Iowa, held the Clare Boothe Luce Professorship from 2007–2012. Dr. Catie Baker, an Assistant Professor in Computer Science, is currently the seventh Clare Boothe Luce Professor at Creighton. The Chair is designed to support a pre-tenure woman in a science or math field through tenure. It provides support to attend conferences, to fund undergraduate researchers, and to purchase supplies and materials.

Four of the six previous Clare Boothe Luce professors remain at Creighton and offer a strong network of support for Baker. Baker underscored the benefits of having a Clare Boothe Luce professorship at a designated institution. When she arrived at Creighton, she immediately shared a connection with the Clare Boothe Luce professors who had

preceded her. This initial welcome segued into continued support and mentorship. At least two of the previous Clare Boothe Luce professors have moved into leadership positions on campus. These opportunities testify to the power of Clare's vision. Creighton's ongoing cycle of *chances* for women to earn a degree, teach others, and move into leadership positions is precisely the sort of outcome Clare aimed to achieve.

As part of her professorship, Baker oversees the selection of the Clare Boothe Luce undergraduate scholarships. Typically, Creighton offers 5–8 full tuition scholarships through the Clare Boothe Luce program. These scholarships are generally awarded to students who are actively engaged in research. Scholarship recipients take a "Women in Science" Seminar, taught by the Clare Boothe Luce Professor. This seminar focuses on issues facing women in science, including the impostor syndrome and stereotype threat.¹⁰ The seminar fosters community and inspires conversations about graduate school, research, etc. As Dr. Baker described it, "the presence of the Clare Boothe Luce undergraduate scholarships creates an environment where women involved in undergraduate research are supported and valued [Interview with Catie Baker]." The ongoing presence of Clare Boothe Luce support at Creighton has not only advanced women at various stages in their careers but has also fostered a favorable environment on campus for women in mathematics and science to succeed as part of a broader community.¹¹

Impact of Invited Institutions

Beyond the institutions designated in Clare's will, other eligible institutions of higher education can apply for awards through the "Invited Institution Competition." Sarah Spence Adams, Professor of Mathematics and Electrical & Computer Engineering at Olin College, received a Clare Boothe Luce scholarship for her final two years as a student at the University of Richmond in Richmond, Virginia in 1995–1997, for example. The award also included funding for undergraduate research. Her professor at Richmond, Dr. James Davis, called the Clare Boothe Luce opportunity to her attention and encouraged her to apply. At the time, she had no idea what "undergraduate

¹⁰[Harris] includes a sample reading list for the Creighton Women in Science Seminar on pp. 109–110.

¹¹For more on the impact of the early years of Clare Boothe Luce Funding at Creighton, see [Harris]. Although written in 1995, her insights apply to contemporary issues. As Harris puts it, "[a] topic of particular concern to students in the past 2 years has been sexual harassment...It is imperative that women not internalize harassment, whether it is called harassment or not. This is particularly true for gender-based harassment. Sexual harassment is much easier to identify, but gender-based harassment is far more common and more dangerous to the self-esteem and success of women. Examples of gender-based harassment include females being ignored in class (not called on) or, when they are called on, a female student's answer being deemed not as correct as a male student's identical response [Harris, p. 107]."

research" meant. Davis showed her a book with an open question he had solved and helped her understand what undergraduate research might look like for her. She studied coding theory with Davis and cryptography with Dr. Gary Greenfield with her Clare Boothe Luce summer undergraduate research support.

The scholarship served as an "enormous source of confidence that I could actually be part of a mathematical research community," Adams says. "I wasn't exactly sure what that meant at the time but I understood that I had received funding to do mathematics. That was a novel idea." She presented her research at the Joint Mathematics Meetings in 1996 and won a prize for her poster. The prize was a gift certificate to select a book at a publisher. As she described it, "[to] claim the prize, I walked into the exhibit hall and was able to pick out any book I wanted. At that point, I only had books that my professors had assigned to me. Choosing my own mathematics book made me feel like a real mathematician [Interview with Sarah Spence Adams]."

Her undergraduate research experiences at Richmond made her a viable candidate for Joe Gallian's Research Experience for Undergraduates (REU) at the University of Minnesota in Duluth. She could take her Clare Boothe Luce funding with her so she did not have to rely on Gallian's NSF resources. The REU "propelled her into research" and helped her gain admission to the NSA Director's Summer Program the following year. These experiences not only improved her level of mathematics but also continued to open doors for her. She had the confidence to pursue a PhD in mathematics at Cornell, specializing in algebraic coding theory, and then to accept a faculty position at Olin College in Needham, Massachusetts, where she is now Professor of Mathematics and Electrical & Computer Engineering and a former Associate Dean of Faculty Affairs and Development. Adams says, "The Clare Boothe Luce experience taught me the value of undergraduate research so I dedicated myself to mentoring undergraduates at Olin." In her first decade at Olin, she mentored around 30 students, approximately 25 of whom continued for multiple years. All but three of these students have published professional journal articles with Adams. "I took their mentorship seriously," Adams explained. "I knew the impact it would have on them to come up with novel results, to edit, to revise, to publish, to attend a conference, to give a talk, to field questions, etc. I knew these values because I discovered them as an undergraduate myself [Interview with Sarah Spence Adams]."

Since Adams received her Clare Boothe Luce support more than twenty years ago, she provides an advantageous perspective on the long-term benefits of the program. "My Clare Boothe Luce experience was officially two years long. As the days, months and years have gone by, however, Adams notes, I have realized how much I gained from the scholarship and the opportunities that came along with it." Not surprisingly, when the Olin Development Office

reached out to Adams to help craft an application for a Clare Boothe Luce grant to support undergraduate research, she was eager to help. Olin modeled their proposal around the two-year undergraduate research experience Adams had at Richmond. Olin's proposal included academic support, summer support, travel to conferences, and travel to see mentors. Adams recalls, "I had seen all of these components at Richmond and with Joe Gallian at Duluth and knew the impact they had on me." In 2011, Olin received an \$180,000 award from the Clare Boothe Luce Foundation. Olin granted their first awards in 2013 [Bailey].

Epilogue

In February, 1942, Clare posed a question of possibility to her daughter Ann. "Would it amuse you," Clare asked, "to have your ma run for Congress and one day get to be a Cabinet minister, or maybe the first lady Vice President? [Morris, 1997, p. 473]." A year later, Albert P. Morano, Clare's executive assistant when she served as a Congresswoman, remarked that she "might even get to be President [Morris, 2014, p. 22]." Thus Clare and Morano at least considered the chance of Clare as the Vice President and/or President of the United States.¹² We know Clare valued a *chance*, for herself, and, as it turns out, for other women.

By the time Clare signed her will in early 1987, her experiences had more than acquainted her with the realities of life as an ambitious woman who exceeded the expectations of the existent social milieu. In perpetuity, then, she drew from these experiences to encourage women to pursue education for careers in fields, that at the time of her death, Clare viewed as primarily available to men. The last three decades testify to the continued vibrancy and veracity of her ideas.

Drawing from her two generations of experience with Clare Boothe Luce awards for mathematics, Sarah Spence Adams observed that "Clare Boothe Luce awards build confidence and create opportunities."¹³ That formidable combination has advanced women not only in mathematics, but also in science and engineering, precisely what Clare Boothe Luce hoped to accomplish with her bequest and what the Clare Boothe Luce Fund aims to achieve today. Clare Boothe Luce may not have understood the intricacies of the fields she supported. She did, however, understand the necessary general framework for women to forge new

¹²A decade after her death, Gore Vidal went so far as to say, "If born a man," she "could have easily been a president, for what that's worth these days: a cool billion, I believe." Vidal, p. 216.

¹³Of course, confidence is also a helpful skill for men in mathematics. University of Chicago mathematician Gilbert Ames Bliss noted the confidence his colleague, E. H. Moore, a pivotal figure in American mathematics in the late 1800s and early 1900s, acquired during his year of study in Berlin and Göttingen in 1885–1886. "There is no doubt," Bliss wrote, "that the year abroad affected greatly... Moore's career as a scholar. It established his confidence in his ability to take an honorable place in the ... circle of mathematicians... [as quoted in Parshall and Rowe, p. 282, my emphasis]."

pathways and find success. Clare Boothe Luce drew from her own experiences and observations to lay out the details for a foundation that would continue to promote and ensure these goals over time.

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