

**Barnard’s Beginning: The Controversy over Annie Nathan Meyer**

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Making Barnard History

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While Annie Nathan Meyer is not usually credited as the founder of Barnard College, she certainly saw herself as crucial to the establishment of this major educational institution for women. Despite Meyer’s disdain for most women’s organizations of the time, she was passionate about women’s equal inclusion in education. It is arguably most interesting, in studying Annie Meyer, to consider for whom she intended Barnard. While unwavering in her dedication to securing women access to higher education, Meyer seemed to have quite idealistic notions and incredibly high standards for the type of woman who belonged at Barnard. In addition, Meyer seemed to believe that a first-rate education should be a privilege available to women of the upper classes—exhibiting some prejudice against those of lower socio-economic levels. While Meyer believed in men and women’s equal intellectual capability, she was not impressed by dominating and aggressive women, and, as an active anti-suffragist, she carefully navigated the male-dominated social sphere, allowing men to come first. Meyer apparently intended Barnard for women who were intellectually passionate. However, she also believed that such an elite education ought to be available primarily to women of considerable social standing who would not disrupt the traditional gender hierarchy. The college, however, despite equal interest in women with intellectual passion, was not willing to restrict the standards for admission to those less “disruptive” women who came from prestigious families or wealth, and Barnard quickly became different from the school Meyer had in mind. As Meyer has historically been a controversial figure, and remains so today, namely in regards to her self-proclaimed role as “founder,” she provides one of the most interesting perspectives through which to consider for whom Barnard was intended when it first opened its doors in 1889.

Because of the opposing views of her contribution to Barnard College, Meyer is often discussed in drastically differing, and even conflicting, terms. The perception of Meyer ranges from a refusal to acknowledge the role she played in founding Barnard College to attributing to her all of Barnard’s success. To fully understand the controversy surrounding Meyer, it may be best to begin with *A History of Barnard College*, which was published in honor of Barnard’s seventy-fifth anniversary. This history, while it does mention Meyer and her dedication to women’s education, does not present her as a “founder.” In fact, the history begins by praising the role Columbia’s President Barnard played in the opening of this women’s college. President Barnard is portrayed as the “idea” behind it all, and Meyer goes largely unmentioned.[[1]](#endnote-1) However, Meyer is eventually mentioned, and actually praised for giving “practically all of her time to the promotion of equality of education for women,” thus recognizing the role she played.[[2]](#endnote-2) The actual establishment of Barnard, however, is discussed in terms that do not frame Meyer as founder: “The time had come to put the plan into tangible form. By February of the next year, 1889, a memorial was ready for the Columbia trustees which gave the name of the new corporation, a list of its trustees, and its constitution and regulations.”[[3]](#endnote-3) Instead of attributing this “plan” to Meyer, there is no direct mention of a founder; the events themselves are discussed, as opposed to mentioning actual contributors. Meyer’s own account, in her autobiographies, *Barnard Beginning* and *It’s Been Fun*, gives her far more recognition. Meyer writes of her own contributions to Barnard and names herself “founder.” This clear discrepancy between histories raises the question: Why does the college push back against Meyer as “the” founder of Barnard College? Does it perhaps have to do with the people for whom Meyer intended the college?

While other histories of Barnard do not focus exclusively on Meyer, many, perhaps because they are not associated with the college, are more willing to include her extensive role. Rosalind Rosenberg’s *Changing the Subject* notes the importance of Meyer’s role, while simultaneously focusing more broadly on women’s success in changing the system of higher education. Rosenberg first discusses Meyer’s determination to create a women’s college:

Working quickly, Meyer’s committee wrote by-laws for its proposed school, organized a board of trustees, secured a building, and presented its plan to the Columbia trustees on February 4, 1889. On April 1, 1889, … Dix’s committee recommended that the board accept the plan proposed by Meyer’s committee.[[4]](#endnote-4)

Rosenberg documents this surprising success, and, unlike *A History of Barnard College*, she recognizes Meyer as instrumental to Barnard’s establishment. However, she seems to frame it as an accomplishment not only for Meyer, but for the many women who had been working alongside her as well. While she refers to the memorial presented to the Board as “Meyer’s memorial,” she also mentions the “committee”[[5]](#endnote-5) of other people working diligently. Rosenberg does not disregard or ignore the role Meyer played. However, she also does not favor Meyer’s contribution over the many people involved and takes a much more general interest in the ways in which women shaped and influenced the system of higher education in New York.

Myrna Gallant Goldenberg presents a very different perspective on Barnard College with “Annie Nathan Meyer: Barnard Godmother and Gotham Gadfly.” Instead of a history of women’s education or of Barnard College, this is a biography of Annie Nathan Meyer. Goldenberg attributes the founding of Barnard College specifically to Meyer. She writes: “Meyer’s major contribution, therefore, lies in education and the influence of the founding of Barnard College on future generations of New York women.”[[6]](#endnote-6) Goldenberg rejects the lack of recognition given to Meyer and criticizes the early histories of Barnard for disregarding the role she played:

These accounts are incomplete keys to Barnard’s history and are ‘limited by their authors’ outlooks.’ … Annie Nathan Meyer is mentioned anecdotally throughout the book [*Barnard College: The First Fifty Years*] as the person who signed the four-year lease for the College’s first home. … The authors thus give credence to Annie Nathan Meyer’s description of herself as the originator of the concept of the affiliated college, but they do not credit her with the founding of the College.[[7]](#endnote-7)

Disappointed with this “outlook,” Goldenberg argues that Meyer’s role is somewhat glossed over.

While Goldenberg does mention Meyer’s collaboration with other successful people, she seems to credit this only to Meyer’s intelligence and collaboration tactics. Goldenberg writes that Meyer “recognized the significance of the opportunity and planned carefully and collaboratively—with the right people.”[[8]](#endnote-8) For Goldenberg, it is Meyer’s intelligence and strategy that allowed the college to come to life. She deeply respects Meyer’s devotion to making women’s education a reality and attributes to Meyer both the creation and success of Barnard College. Despite the recognition accorded Meyer by historians such as Goldenberg and Rosenberg, however, there are still those who diminish Meyer’s role, perhaps because of a fundamental discomfort with the type of woman for whom she intended Barnard.

These opposed valuations of Meyer’s role may simply be a matter of emphasis, with those diminishing Meyer’s contributions focusing on her somewhat exclusionary ideas of the Barnard Woman, and those crediting her role focusing on her dedication to making women’s education a reality. Meyer’s dedication to women’s education may have come from her own passion to gain access to higher education. She commences *Barnard Beginnings*, her autobiography of sorts, by writing: “As far back as I can remember, I was filled with a passionate desire to go to college.”[[9]](#endnote-9) However, only one year after beginning the Collegiate Course in 1885, she left—discouraged both by the treatment of female students at Columbia and society’s thoughts on women who took part in higher education. Meyer first writes of this when she describes taking her examinations:

The Professor had … told me to read certain pages and I had done so; but he calmly proceeded to base his questions, not on the textbooks assigned, but entirely upon the lectures which he had given to his classes – lectures which I, of course, had not been permitted to attend.[[10]](#endnote-10)

While frustrated with this reality, she later explains that her decision to leave the Collegiate Course had to do with the common belief that “only unattractive girls, undeniable spinsters, are really interested in the Higher Education of Women.”[[11]](#endnote-11) She writes, much later, in the preface to *Woman’s Work in America*: “We may acknowledge that the day is past when it is necessary seriously to plead the capacity of women to accomplish certain things; that victory has been won with tears of blood; but the fight still centers about the propriety of it”[[12]](#endnote-12) While this discrimination caused her frustration and embarrassment at the time, it was later the inspiration behind her desire to change the system of higher education and to create a space for intelligent women seeking knowledge.

In her own accounts, Meyer seems to intend Barnard for women who have a thirst for knowledge, and, most importantly, for women who are truly “intellectual.” She writes of the “young women [who] were heart-hungry, brain famished. Their bodies were fed three times a day, but their minds were empty. Their entire being out of tune, they didn’t seem to fit any groove.”[[13]](#endnote-13) Because of her own thwarted passion and displaced desire to learn as a young woman, Meyer recognizes in these deeply intellectual women this sense of isolation and is impelled to create for them a home. Meyer, a strong woman herself, longs to give these women something that never belonged to her.

While Meyer is deeply concerned with creating this legitimate academic space for women, she is also adamant that Barnard College is meant only for women who meet a certain intellectual standard. She writes: “To me nothing in the education of women mattered so much as the creation of right standards.”[[14]](#endnote-14) She writes later:

We are as poor as church mice, but we intend to maintain our standards. We are not giving our time and strength to show that women are unable to carry out the same studies as men; but the opposite. If we cannot live without sacrificing our ideals, it is not the ideals that will be sacrificed.[[15]](#endnote-15)

Meyer refused to waver on these “ideals” for women—unwilling to change her understanding of for whom Barnard was intended. This sentiment is seen again in 1905 when the Trustees begin to discuss changing the educational policy at Barnard. Nicholas Murray Butler writes: “It is provided that students may here-after be admitted to Barnard College without examination of any language or its literature, and accepted as candidates for the degree of Bachelor of Science.”[[16]](#endnote-16) Meyer, however, takes issue with this because it implies that the standards for acceptance have been lowered. She wants to ensure that any Barnard student meets only the most serious intellectual qualifications. She makes her claim to the Board:

Is the contemplated degree without Latin to be considered or not the equivalent of the academic degree? Does it represent in the eyes of the faculty the kind of general training that is worthy of the academic stamp? … We are told that we ought to permit women to enter Barnard without demanding Latin because of the large number of women who should seek to enter the profession through us. It seems to me that if the Trustees of Barnard have a peculiarly sacred trust, it is in the matter of admitting women to the professions. If there is any one thing of which I am firmly convinced, it is that it is only the exceptionally fitted woman that should enter the profession. On the contrary we can well afford, to make it more difficult for a woman to enter the professions than for a man. … we can continue to demand the highest possible standards in the training of women, whether academic or professional.[[17]](#endnote-17)

Remaining committed to her ideals for women’s education, Meyer demands from Barnard College what she wanted as a student, but was never given. While women were typically ignored, Meyer wants women to overcome limiting expectations and prove their intellectual capacity.

However tempting it is to imagine that Meyer wished to establish women’s education at Barnard as part of a feminist movement to equalize the privileges generally accorded men and women, this does not appear to be the case. Meyer is actually quite exclusive and seems to exhibit certain prejudices, namely against those of “undesirable” social standing. This prejudice comes from Meyer’s own obsession with her “elite” family background, which was, as Louise Berkinow notes, “according to Annie, ‘the nearest approach to royalty in the United States.’”[[18]](#endnote-18) Meyer prides herself on her family history:

The Nathans, Sephardic Jews, have American roots reaching back to the founding of the Virginia colony. By the late 19th century, they are an elite New York institution, with a family-founded synagogue, seats on the Stock Exchange and prominent members like poet Emma Lazarus … .[[19]](#endnote-19)

This pride in her “old American” background is highly significant for Meyer’s sense of what kind of woman is “fit” for Barnard. She exhibits considerable concern with social standing, even before Barnard opens its doors. When choosing the members for the Board of Trustees or the Associate Members, those with the power to sway public opinion and to make Barnard a well-respected New York institution were most important for Meyer. She writes:

I used to call the Associate Members of the College ‘the tail that flew the kite.’ The Trustees had been chosen not for their position in the community, but rather as persons of weight than of fashion. Something more was needed to make the Higher Education of Women really popular and that was the approval of Society Leaders. … So every effort was made to make the name of Barnard at least as familiar in New York Society as that of Vassar or Bryn Mawr.[[20]](#endnote-20)

These social leaders, from Meyer’s perspective, had the power to define Barnard in its infancy. In order for the institution to reflect the elite, “old America” that Meyer herself feels she represents, those involved with Barnard from its start must be quite carefully chosen.

Establishing Barnard’s social and educational stature was crucial even before the doors opened; for this reputation to last, however, the women who attend must also be carefully handpicked. Meyer does not seem to intend Barnard for those of the lower classes, her prejudice specifically pertaining to Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe. Meyer, as a Sephardic Jew living at 749 Madison Avenue,[[21]](#endnote-21) married to the successful Dr. Meyer, separates herself from the less successful, less assimilated Jewish community. This prejudice is also seen with the German Jews, who Meyer feels have not yet established themselves on American soil and whose quick influx of wealth has left them ungrounded and materialistic. She writes to Laura Gill in 1902, seeking advice for her daughter’s schooling:

I do not like the atmosphere of the Sachs School simply because the girls there come almost exclusively from a wealthy class – one which had not the stability of generations of wealth … Margaret comes from a family in America since the 17th century and I do not care – another reason – to have her in such an exclusively German atmosphere.[[22]](#endnote-22)

Reflecting her desire to surround herself and her family with other pre-Revolutionary American families, this prejudice becomes more significant in Meyer’s involvement with Barnard. As Lynn Gordon writes:

Meyer actually agreed with [Dean] Gildersleeve about some aspects of the “Jewish problem.” She too, thought that Barnard’s Jewish students should be of the highest social standing, and that recent Eastern European immigrants and their children did not qualify. Meyer believed that anti-Semitism stemmed in part from the bad behavior and poor moral character of individual Jews.[[23]](#endnote-23)

Though a Jew herself, Meyer separates herself from those who do not represent themselves or their shared Jewish identity “properly.”

This “classism” certainly has an effect on those whom she prefers to accept to Barnard, as shown by Meyer’s correspondence with Barnard Dean Virginia Gildersleeve. Meyer is offended by a sentence in a Barnard appeal that separates Jews from other races. While this looks like an effort against anti-Semitism, it actually seems that Meyer’s interest lies in distinguishing herself from the “lower-class” Jews. The appeal states: “Among the eight hundred students are Americans, Germans, Irish, Jews, Italians, Russians … .”[[24]](#endnote-24) Meyer rejects the notion that all Jews are the same. She first writes to Gildersleeve: “I shall hesitate to send out any ‘appeals’ while that unfortunate reference is made to Jews. … You see as an American Jewess it grates on me terribly, one who is descended from our pre-Revolutionary stock to be classified separately from ‘Americans’. …”[[25]](#endnote-25) Later, she writes:

You can’t quite see how I resent the implication that Jews aren’t American – and also the incalculable harm [that] is done from bunching all Jews alike into one class. … It is the ignorant classifying them just as Jews and with no racial differences that makes the majority so blind to the differences between impossible Jews and cultivated ones![[26]](#endnote-26)

Meyer does not want to be mistaken for an “impossible” Jew, especially because of her elite American identity. While she fights the “anti-Semitism” that affects wealthy Jews like Jacob Schiff, for whom she believed Barnard Hall should be named,[[27]](#endnote-27) she reserves this battle for those Jews with wealth or considerable social standing. Meyer’s effort to separate herself from certain Jews comes from a desire to preserve her own status and identity, rather than to accept diversity. Meyer embraces a more selective admissions process, in which “impossible,” unassimilated Jews are kept out, while those with wealth or prestige are favored.

Along with her desire to establish certain social standards for those attending Barnard, Meyer also had quite conservative opinions about the relationship between men and women. It was Meyer’s belief “that the masculine viewpoint and method of attack have inestimable value, and are essential complements to the special contributions of women.”[[28]](#endnote-28) While many other women respected and valued the opinion of men, Meyer took this respect to a different level than most advocates for female education. Despite Meyer’s advocacy for women’s educational success and her praise of female accomplishments, in works such as *Woman’s Work in America,* Meyer was, in fact, an adamant anti-suffragist and abhorred wildly behaved women. She disparages another advocate for women’s education, Lillie Blake, who was not able to match Meyer’s own success, due, Meyer thought, to her temperament: “[Lillie Blake] did exhibit many symptoms of that gay and irresponsible mixture of sex-consciousness and self-esteem which I … was moved to describe in a play as ‘spread-henism.’”[[29]](#endnote-29) Meyer believes that the only way to achieve success with men is to remain tame and demure, which is evidenced by the “Petition to the Regents of the University of New York 1889.” Meyer writes the “Petition”; however, in it she credits President Barnard with the idea for the women’s school: “Under the favor of the late President Barnard of Columbia College an effort has been recently made to interest Columbia College in furthering the desire of women for instruction in higher education.”[[30]](#endnote-30) Meyer diminishes her own role, perhaps to ensure success by not disrupting the gender hierarchy.

Along with her belief that this is the way to succeed in a male-dominated society, she also finds the behavior typical of early feminists inappropriate. As suffrage becomes the goal of the twentieth century, Meyer becomes even more adamant in her distaste. She writes in her autobiography, *It’s Been Fun*, about her fight against suffrage:

I gave up many years of my life to fighting against women’s suffrage. … there was no question in my mind that at bottom of the intense desire for the power of the ballot lay—sometimes hidden, sometimes quite openly—a great deal of sex jealously amounting in many instances to sex hatred.[[31]](#endnote-31)

Meyer disliked women who fought against the gender hierarchy. For Meyer, suffrage would simply cause a greater degree of separation, as well as hatred and jealously between men and women. Meyer respected men and believed that disdain for them was unnecessary and harmful:

Although her belief in women’s education equal to what was available to men was unshakeable, it did not lead her to embracing political equality. … Annie sneered at the idea that women’s “moral superiority,” would clean up the corrupt public sphere. She detested mobs and the “noisy methods” that were catching on in America.[[32]](#endnote-32)

Given her distaste for these “noisy” activists, it seems that Meyer simply would not have intended Barnard for this type of woman.

Consequently, when Barnard quickly became involved with the suffrage movement, Meyer seems to have resisted strongly. As Lynn Gordon writes:

In the early twentieth century [Meyer] became an active antisuffragist, who preached that married women must be totally devoted to home and family duties. … [However,] Barnard students were noted for their high rate of participation in political causes and for the large number of graduates in the scholarly and professional careers. … [Meyer] often complained that [students] knew and cared nothing about her services to the college and that they too often invoked Barnard’s name in suffrage activities.[[33]](#endnote-33)

Meyer saw this type of woman as a threat to the traditional gender roles, which she worked diligently against, especially as an anti-suffragist. At Barnard, then, Meyer would have fought against admitting this type of woman, as she preferred women from prestigious families and favored more demure, less socially disruptive women. She wanted women with a passion for intellect and learning; however, most women were unlike her in this regard and did not have this passion for knowledge without also having the desire to fight for women in other aspects of traditional society.

Despite these lesser-known prejudices, Meyer is traditionally known for her willingness to support minorities. She did fight for the acceptance of some Jews at Barnard and also ensured the admittance of the first African-American student, Zora Neal Hurston. However, Meyer’s motivation seems to be not an interest in equality, but a demonstration of her own wealth and class patronage. Her desire to help apparently comes from a wish to distinguish herself, in order to call attention to her own status. For example, Meyer contests the “bunching”[[34]](#endnote-34) together of all types of Jews only because it is important to her that “old American” Jews, like herself, or those with money, be distinguished from the rest. She writes in the same letter to Virginia Gildersleeve in which she refers to herself as a “pre-Revolutionary” Jew: “I believe it has been settled once and for all that the word Jew does not mean a race, cannot since so many races are represented among the Jews.”[[35]](#endnote-35) She does, then, fight against this seemingly anti-Semitic notion, though it seems to come more from a desire to label herself as American than to defend the Jewish people.

However, Meyer also supports those minorities in which she is not represented. Still, while she does defend minority rights, namely in the literature she writes, she does not seem willing to go to any great lengths to ensure their success. She writes the play *Black Souls*, which calls into question the meaning of “race” in America. Montgomery Gregory, a writer for the *Journal of Negro Life*, writes of the play: “[This] is both an important social document and a dramatic tour-de-force. The author has succeeded admirably in projecting the Negro against the American scene, battling the fateful forces of race prejudice while still following the star of his destiny.”[[36]](#endnote-36) By writing of the problem of racial inequality in the United States, Meyer displays her lack of prejudice, as well as her support of minorities. However, this support goes only as far as the page. Actually, Meyer may be most concerned with her own advancement and becoming a “noteworthy” or “noticed” member of society. Carla Kaplan writes:

[Meyer] also craved attention and wanted to “stand out.” … “God! I’d like to be recognized,” she wrote in 1924, hard at work on *Black Souls*. Whereas Barnard had swept her name under the rug, *Black Souls*, in 1932, finally seemed poised to garner her the notice that she wanted.[[37]](#endnote-37)

It seems that Meyer’s motivation in supporting minorities came from her own desire for recognition rather than her desire to encourage the acceptance of the oppressed. Even Meyer’s individual support for women like Zora Neal Hurston can be seen as a ploy for her own success. Kaplan writes that Meyer “used her pull to persuade Barnard to accept Hurston on a scholarship, though no black student had ever been admitted before.”[[38]](#endnote-38) However, this desire to help advance Hurston may have come from her knowledge that it would allow Meyer herself to stand out and because Hurston was incredibly helpful for Meyer’s work with *Black Souls*. Kaplan writes: “[Meyer] asked Johnson to edit and authenticate her work, but she also felt she needed the input of a black woman writer. The perfect opportunity presented itself at the 1925 *Opportunity* awards, where she met Zora Neal Hurston and found her enormously engaging.”[[39]](#endnote-39) While she certainly seemed to connect with Hurston on a personal level, it cannot be denied that Hurston’s benefit from their relationship equaled Meyer’s advantage from Hurston’s input and support. While Meyer’s “support” of minorities suggests a willingness to open Barnard to a larger community, Meyer’s real motivation may have been her own social advancement.

Given the tensions between Meyer’s committed advocacy for women’s education and her relatively conservative political and social stance, there is often pushback against the idea that Annie Nathan Meyer was the original founder of Barnard College. Meyer said at one point: “‘I was always more of a pioneer than people realize.’”[[40]](#endnote-40) While she certainly considers herself to be the major force behind Barnard’s creation, the college does not agree. Gordon writes: “Meyer frequently complained that the college slighted her in its histories and elsewhere.”[[41]](#endnote-41) To this day there is no monument to Meyer on this campus, and most students do not know of her or her contribution to the school. This tendency to diminish Meyer’s role in the founding of Barnard may come from the inability to resolve some of the apparent conflicts in her positions regarding women. Despite Meyer’s advocacy for women in education, she did not support the advancement of women in other social arenas. Gordon notes: “Meyer’s anachronistic views on women did not make her the ideal symbol for Barnard.”[[42]](#endnote-42) For many reasons, it seems Barnard College did not, and does not, allow Annie Meyer sole recognition for founding the college. In fact, when Meyer came out with *Barnard Beginnings*, the school actively spoke against it in the *Barnard College Alumnae Monthly*, writing: “It is one woman’s story of the fight, but certainly not a ‘one woman fight’ as Mrs. Meyer should be the first to insist.”[[43]](#endnote-43) Despite Meyer’s own dedication to the cause, her elitist nature, and her idea that Barnard was intended only for prestigious and conservative women created the desire to diminish her role.[[44]](#endnote-44)In the final consideration, however, although it must be acknowledged that, for Meyer, advocacy for women’s education was not a part of a larger women’s rights effort, she does deserve significant recognition for her advocacy and action in establishing Barnard as a separate women’s affiliated college.

Endnotes

1. *A History of Barnard College: Published in Honor of the Seventy-fifth Anniversary of the College* (New York: Barnard College, 1964), 7. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Ibid, 10. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Ibid, 12. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. Rosalind Rosenberg, *Changing the Subject: How the Women of Columbia Shaped the Way We Think about Sex and Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013), 54. [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. Ibid, 53. [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. Myrna Gallant Goldenberg, “Annie Nathan Meyer: Barnard Godmother and Gotham Gadfly” (PhD diss., University of Maryland, 1987), vi. [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. Ibid, 11-14. [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. Ibid, 114. [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
9. Annie Nathan Meyer, *Barnard Beginnings* (Cambridge: The Riverside Press, 1935), 3. [↑](#endnote-ref-9)
10. Ibid, 18. [↑](#endnote-ref-10)
11. Ibid, 19. [↑](#endnote-ref-11)
12. Annie Nathan Meyer, *It’s Been Fun* (New York: Henry Schuman, Inc., 1951), Chapter VI, Book III. [↑](#endnote-ref-12)
13. Ibid, 130. [↑](#endnote-ref-13)
14. Meyer, *Barnard Beginnings*, 46. [↑](#endnote-ref-14)
15. Ibid, 160. [↑](#endnote-ref-15)
16. Letter from Nicholas Murray Butler to the Trustees of Barnard College, 14 April 1905, BC 1.4: Barnard College Trustees Minutes Nov 17, 1899 to Dec. 14, 1906, Barnard Archives and Special Collections, Barnard Library, Barnard College, New York, NY.  [↑](#endnote-ref-16)
17. Letter from Annie Nathan Meyer to the Trustees of Barnard College, 14 April 1905. BC 1.4: Barnard College Trustees Minutes Nov. 17, 1899 to Dec. 14, 1906, Barnard Archives and Special Collections, Barnard Library, Barnard College, New York, NY. [↑](#endnote-ref-17)
18. Louise Berkinow, “Sisters in a House Divided: Annie Nathan Meyer, Maud Nathan and the Fight for Woman Suffrage,” *Barnard College Alumnae Monthly*, 2. [↑](#endnote-ref-18)
19. Ibid, 1. [↑](#endnote-ref-19)
20. Meyer, *Barnard Beginnings,* 115-116. [↑](#endnote-ref-20)
21. Barnard College Meeting of Trustees and Associate Members, 11 November 1891, BC 1.1: Board of Trustees—charters concerning the higher education of women 1882-1898, Box 2, Barnard Archives and Special Collections, Barnard Library, Barnard College, New York, NY. [↑](#endnote-ref-21)
22. Annie Nathan Meyer to Laura Gill, 1902, Barnard Archives and Special Collections, Barnard Library, Barnard College, New York, NY. [↑](#endnote-ref-22)
23. Lynn D. Gordon, “Annie Nathan Meyer and Barnard College: Mission and Identity in Women’s Higher Education, 1889-1950,” *History of Education Quarterly* 26 (1986): 516, accessed February 1, 2015, http://www.jstor.org/stable/369010. [↑](#endnote-ref-23)
24. An Appeal for Barnard College, December 1912, Subject Files — Jewish Students at Barnard, Barnard Archives and Special Collections, Barnard Library, Barnard College, New York, NY. [↑](#endnote-ref-24)
25. Annie Nathan Meyer to Virginia Gildersleeve, Autumn 1911, Subject Files – Jewish Students at Barnard, Barnard Archives and Special Collections, Barnard Library, Barnard College, New York, NY. [↑](#endnote-ref-25)
26. Annie Nathan Meyer to Virginia Gildersleeve, Autumn 1912, Subject Files – Jewish Students at Barnard, Barnard Archives and Special Collections, Barnard Library, Barnard College, New York, NY. [↑](#endnote-ref-26)
27. Annie Nathan Meyer to George Plimpton, 6 December 1933, Subject Files – Jewish Students at Barnard, Barnard Archives and Special Collections, Barnard Library, Barnard College, New York, NY. [↑](#endnote-ref-27)
28. Meyer, *Barnard Beginnings*, 83. [↑](#endnote-ref-28)
29. Ibid, 66. [↑](#endnote-ref-29)
30. “Petition to the Regents of the University of New York,” July 1889, BC 1.1: Board of Trustees—charters and amendments, 1893-1988, Box 1, Barnard Archives and Special Collections, Barnard Library, Barnard College, New York, NY. [↑](#endnote-ref-30)
31. Meyer, *It’s Been Fun*, Chapter XI, Book III. [↑](#endnote-ref-31)
32. Berkinow, “Sisters in a House Divided,” 1. [↑](#endnote-ref-32)
33. Gordon, “Annie Nathan Meyer and Barnard College,” 511-513. [↑](#endnote-ref-33)
34. Annie Nathan Meyer to Virginia Gildersleeve, Autumn 1912. [↑](#endnote-ref-34)
35. Annie Nathan Meyer to Virginia Gildersleeve, Autumn 1911. Meyer uses the term “race” as “nationality” or “ethnicity” would now be used. [↑](#endnote-ref-35)
36. Article in *Journal of Negro Life* by Gregory Montgomery, May 1933, BC 20.8: Annie Nathan Meyer, Founder and Trustee—Literary Manuscripts and Ephemera, 1889-1951, Box 1, 1.13, Barnard Archives and Special Collections, Barnard Library, Barnard College, New York, NY. [↑](#endnote-ref-36)
37. Carla Kaplan, *Miss Anne in Harlem: The White Women of the Black Renaissance* (New York: HarperCollins, 2013), 178. [↑](#endnote-ref-37)
38. Ibid, 172. [↑](#endnote-ref-38)
39. Ibid. [↑](#endnote-ref-39)
40. qtd in: Kaplan, *Miss Anne in Harlem*, 192. [↑](#endnote-ref-40)
41. Gordon, “Annie Nathan Meyer and Barnard College,” 506. [↑](#endnote-ref-41)
42. Ibid, 513. [↑](#endnote-ref-42)
43. “Barnard Publishes,” November 1935, *Barnard College Alumnae Monthly* Vol. 23-26, 1933-1937, Barnard Archives and Special Collections, Barnard Library, Barnard College, New York, NY. [↑](#endnote-ref-43)
44. Meyer may be getting a bit more credit over time and especially as the college has reached its 125th anniversary. In an insert included in one of Barnard’s most recent fundraising letters, Meyer is referred to as “one of the intrepid founders of Barnard College.” [↑](#endnote-ref-44)