



# **Bryn Mawr College Pa (College Prowler: Bryn Mawr College Off the Record)**

*Sarah Friedman*

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## **Bryn Mawr College Pa (College Prowler: Bryn Mawr College Off the Record) Sarah Friedman Introduction from the Author**


If you don't like hearing about ambitious, scholarly women, stop reading this book. Bryn Mawr probably isn't for you. If you are still reading, I'll tell you a story about one of the most famous of these women. The story starts with a woman named M. Carey Thomas who earned a BA from Cornell and a PhD from the University of Zurich and wrote a letter to the trustees of the future college of Bryn Mawr, proposing that she be appointed as the college's first president. The trustees were skeptical and gave her the "consolation prize" of being an English professor and dean. From this position, Thomas took nearly full control of the college's fate and changed what was intended by the trustees to be a finishing school for Quaker ladies to a training ground for serious scholars. Thomas became president of the college in 1894 and served until 1922. She is most noted for her strong feminist views and architectural vision, but she also held some rather unappealing notions about race and class equality.

Now that you have been introduced to one of Bryn Mawr's most influential characters, you may be wondering how much of her legacy colors campus today. The architecture that Thomas envisioned continues to set a classical collegiate atmosphere. There also still remains a healthy strain of feminist leftism running through the student body, as well as the more consistent pulse of intense academic activity. The mention of Thomas's elitist beliefs may have you worried, but don't stop reading yet. Bryn Mawr, like most other liberal arts schools today, actively seeks to attract students from all backgrounds and prides itself on its diversity.

Though Greek is no longer a prerequisite for admission and students can choose from a range of elective courses in their major rather than completing predetermined tracks, Bryn Mawr still demands that students commit themselves to their academics. This fosters both an individual intensity and a strong connection between students. Add the all-woman element, and you can see that Bryn Mawr does not offer a typical college experience. But Bryn Mawr still attracts women from all over the world who are seeking a well-rounded liberal arts education.

On a personal note, I had not heard of Bryn Mawr until I began researching colleges. However, judging by the awe in voices that I respected when I mentioned Bryn Mawr as a possible college choice, other people had. Now, as a senior, I hope I can introduce you to the Bryn Mawr that I have come to know. And, as inspiring as M. Carey Thomas was, you will want to know more about Bryn Mawr than its reputation. Read on for information on the most important aspects of life as a Mawrter.

Sarah Friedman, Author  
Bryn Mawr College

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