

[Ed. Note: in 1909-1910, 51/337 (@15%) of BMC undergraduates were from Southern states.]

1916

M. Carey Thomas's address at the opening of college included her thoughts on white intellectual supremacy and expressed pride in the ethnic homogeneity of Bryn Mawr students. While she was certainly not alone among academics of her time in her eugenic theories, they cannot be ignored. [Selected from President M. Carey Thomas' address on the opening of the academic year. [From the papers of M. Carey Thomas. Bryn Mawr College Archives]

"If the present intellectual supremacy of the white races is maintained, as I hope that it will be for centuries to come, I believe that it will be because they are the only races that have seriously begun to educate their women . . .

It seems to be only in a strictly limited temperate zone, only on a very small part of the earth's surface that men can maintain continuous intellectual activity. Roughly speaking this zone includes Great Britain, Scandinavia, France, Spain, Italy, Germany, Austria, Belgium, Holland, probably the greater part of the United States and Canada, some parts of Russia and South America, and perhaps parts of certain other countries that have not yet been sufficiently investigated . . . One thing we know beyond doubt and that is that certain races have never yet in the history of the world manifested any continuous mental activity nor even any continuous power of organized government. Such are the pure Negroes of Africa, the Indians, the Exquimauz, the South Sea Islanders, the Turks, etc. . . .

These facts must be faced by a country like the United States which is fast becoming, if it has not already become, the melting pot of nations into which are cast at the rate of a million a year the backward peoples of Europe like the Czechs, the Slavs, and the south Italians. If the laws of heredity mean anything whatsoever we are jeopardizing the intellectual heritage of the American people by this headlong intermixture of races . . .

. . . if we tarnish or inheritance of racial power at the source, our nation will never again be the same. . .