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Interview Note: Please call for "Great Writer" interview availability

TOP 10 REASONS SO MANY GREAT WRITERS COME FROM BARNARD

SUNDAY, NOV 6, 2005 - GREAT WRITERS AT BARNARD: 75 Great Writers – all graduates of NYC's Barnard College – will return for a day of 20+ provocative panel discussions about what they do, how they do it, and how their work affects and is affected by the world at large. They include **Pulitzer Prize, Tony, Emmy, and Golden Globe winners, National Book Award finalists, and NY Times Notable and Oprah Book Club authors.** With 1300 published authors, 9 MacArthur "Genius" Grant Winners (more than any liberal arts college), and 8 Pulitzer Prize Winners, Barnard has produced **more notable writers than any school its size**, including: **Edwidge Danticat '90** (*Breath, Eyes, Memory*), **Mary Gordon '71**, **Patricia Highsmith '42** (*The Talented Mr. Ripley*), **Zora Neale Hurston '28** (*Their Eyes Were Watching God*), **Erica Jong '63**, **June Jordan '57**, **Jhumpa Lahiri '89** (*Interpreter of Maladies*), **Anna Quindlen '74**, **Lynne Sharon Schwartz '59** and **Lionel Shriver '78** (*We Need to Talk About Kevin*), first American winner of **U.K. Orange Prize for Fiction.**

How does a small liberal arts college like Barnard (2300 students, 4 acres) produce so many great writers?

#10. AMERICAN DREAM: Barnard has students from 40 countries, 49 states, and a rich history of educating the **gifted daughters of first-generation immigrants** – many from NYC's outer-boroughs, first in family to go to college, and beneficiaries of need-blind admissions (more than half of all students receive financial aid). Witness **Cristina Garcia '79** (*Dreaming in Cuban*), Lahiri, Danticat, and **Suki Kim '92** (*The Interpreter*), who says, *"Barnard to me was about acclimating to America...The place was full of confident, sophisticated young women... That's what motivated me...There aren't many places where women are taught to believe they can do anything."*

#9. SMART WOMEN: Barnard is **highly selective**; in 2002, 3,686 applicants applied for 543 places, and 1,269 were admitted. The Class of 2008 (approx. 553 students) had an average secondary school GPA of 3.93 (4.0 scale) or 94.55 (100-point scale), and median SAT scores of 690 verbal and 660 math.

#8. BIG APPLE: New York City has always provided **great raw material** for observant chroniclers, and many aspiring writers come to Barnard to experience urban life in the publishing and journalism capitals of the world.

#7. PROFESSOR-MENTORS: Of 300 Barnard faculty members (1:10 faculty:student ratio), 90% hold a Ph.D. or highest appropriate degree and more than half are women (vs. approx. 37% nationwide). Since 1889, they've been challenging their bright young charges to **find their authentic voice and tell their unique story.** In her first Barnard writing course, Danticat recalls Professor Elizabeth Dalton telling her that no one was writing about Haiti's tragic and compelling history, and suggesting she be the one to do it.

#6. "WAYS OF KNOWING": Bridging the traditional liberal arts & sciences, and ensuring intellectual breadth, the College's **rigorous graduation requirements** are based on nine major pillars of human knowledge.

#5. BOOK CRAZY: Literary appetites are legendary at Barnard (witness Quindlen's *How Reading Changed My Life* and Sharon Schwartz's *Ruined by Reading: A Life in Books*) where, in addition to the on-campus library, students have full privileges at Ivy League partner **Columbia University's Top 10 library** across the street.

#4. WRITING CENTER: Because every writer needs a reader, bestselling author Jong (whose 1973 *Fear of Flying* has sold 12+ million copies worldwide) has endowed an on-campus center, open all hours and staffed by specially selected/trained **Barnard Writing Fellows** – gifted students who counsel peers in the art of writing.

#3. OLD GIRL NETWORK: Accomplished **alumnae writers, editors, and literary agents** give frequent on-campus readings/talks, sponsor internships, and serve as ad hoc mentors, heroines, and fairy godmothers.

#2. INDEPENDENT THINKERS: Barnard nurtures both a **passion** for original ideas, and the **courage** necessary to advance them. *"The College changed my life,"* says Quindlen. *"I really felt when I became an opinion columnist at the [NY] Times that I could not have done that job had I not gone to Barnard."*

#1. MOTTO: "Those that don't got it, can't show it. Those that got it, can't hide it." Zora Neale Hurston '28