

Annotated Bibliography

Primary Sources

Alexander, Virginia. "The Health Status and Health Needs of the Negro Adolescent." *The Journal of Negro Education* 9, no. 3 (1940): 300-10.

This source is a journal article written by Virginia Alexander about the health status of young black people based on the overall mortality of the black population. We used this source to provide evidence of her research on the correlation between black mortality and economic status. We used the information in our Public Research section of our reform section.

Alexander, Virginia. Letter to Helen Dickens, April 30, 1935. Virginia Margaret Alexander. University of Pennsylvania Archives, Philadelphia.

This is a letter from Virginia Alexander to Helen Dickens expressing her desire for Helen to come work at Aspiranto with her, entailing details of how Aspiranto operates. We used some of the information in our Aspiranto section. Images of the letter were used in our short term significance section.

Alexander, Virginia. Letter to Raymond Pace Alexander, February 11, 1932. Virginia Margaret Alexander Paper. University of Pennsylvania Archives, Philadelphia.

This is a letter from Virginia Alexander to Raymond Alexander about their sister Irene who Virginia is reluctantly taking in. This proves that Virginia's work affected her relationship with her family and limited her ability to help her sister. We used an image of the letter in our Aspiranto section.

Alexander, Virginia. *The Social, Economic, and Health Problems of North Philadelphia Negroes and Their Relationship to a Proposed Interracial Public Health Demonstration Center*. 1935. Virginia Margaret Alexander Papers. University of Pennsylvania Archives and Records Center, Philadelphia.

This book discusses the poverty experienced within black communities in North Philadelphia and suggestions to help with the situations. This was used to show what Alexander researched and what she did to improve healthcare in our reform research section.

Alexander, Virginia, and Georges E. Simpson. "Negro Hospitalization." *Opportunity Journal of Negro Life* 15, no. 8 (1937): 231-32.

The 1935 study *Negro Hospitalization* by Virginia M. Alexander and George E. Simpson exposed racial discrimination in Philadelphia's hospitals which denied Black patients care and Black medical professionals training opportunities. This source was used as an example to explain why the creation of interracial health centers were needed in our reform research section.

Alexander-Minter, Rae. Letter, April 13, 1986. Accessed December 22, 2025.

https://drexel0-my.sharepoint.com/personal/mh683_drexel_edu/_layouts/15/onedrive.aspx?ga=1&id=%2Fpersonal%2Fmh683%5Fdrexel%5Fedu%2FDocuments%2FResearcher

%5FDownloads%2DLegacy%5FCenter%5FArchives%2FBlackWomenPhysicians%2FAlexander%5FVirginia%5FMae%2DBWPP%5Facc178%2DDrexelMedArchives%2Epdf&parent=%2Fpersonal%2Fmh683%5Fdrexel%5Fedu%2FDocuments%2FResearcher%5FDownloads%2DLegacy%5FCenter%5FArchives%2FBlackWomenPhysicians.

This was a letter that provided a copy of the remarks delivered at the unveiling of the portrait of Dr. Virginia Alexander by her niece, Dr. Rae Alexander-Minter. We used this information to prove Alexander's importance in the black medical society, her health home, and in her childhood. We quoted this letter in our historical context section.

Baker, Joseph V. Dr. Alexander Mourned throughout the City. Virginia Margaret Alexander Papers. University of Pennsylvania Archives, Philadelphia.

This is a news article written after the death of Virginia Alexander. We used this to prove that she spent her life making health programs to benefit her community and public health in our reaction tab.

Baker, Joseph V. "Scrolls to Honor 2 Women Doctors." *The Philadelphia Inquirer* (Philadelphia), October 13, 1940. Accessed April 12, 2026.

<https://www.proquest.com/hnppennsylvaniacollection1/docview/1832895760/2E6A288D04CB4791PQ/1?accountid=10977&sourcetype=Newspapers#>.

This is a newspaper article about Dr. Dorothy Boulding Ferebee and Dr. Virginia Alexander being presented gold scrolls awards for their "Outstanding services in Negro Health." We used this to prove that Virginia Alexander had a significant impact during her time. We used an image of the article in our short-term significance section.

Dickens, Helen Octavia. "Oral History Interview with Helen Octavia Dickens, M.D." By Darlene Clark Hine. flac audio, 70:06. Drexel University Legacy Center and Archive, March 30, 1988. Accessed January 21, 2026.

https://drexel0-my.sharepoint.com/personal/mh683_drexel_edu/_layouts/15/onedrive.aspx?viewid=fa66f2bb%2Dbb95%2D4646%2Db9fb%2D4d352381e21d&id=%2Fpersonal%2Fmh683%5Fdrexel%5Fedu%2FDocuments%2FResearcher%5FDownloads%2DLegacy%5FCenter%5FArchives%2FBlackWomenPhysicians%2FBWPP%20oral%20history%20transcripts%20and%20recordings%2Fa178%5Foralhistorytranscript%2Ddickens%2Epdf&parent=%2Fpersonal%2Fmh683%5Fdrexel%5Fedu%2FDocuments%2FResearcher%5FDownloads%2DLegacy%5FCenter%5FArchives%2FBlackWomenPhysicians%2FBWPP%20oral%20history%20transcripts%20and%20recordings.

This is an audio recording of an interview of Helen Dickens in which she explains her medical career. We used this to prove Virginia Alexander's impact on Helen Dickens and her career. We used a short audio clip from this interview in our significance tab.

The Doctor Virginia M. Alexander Scholarship Foundation. "The Doctor Virginia M. Alexander Scholarship Foundation Incorporated." 1961. Accessed January 26, 2026.

https://drexel0-my.sharepoint.com/personal/mh683_drexel_edu/_layouts/15/onedrive.aspx?ga=1&id=%2Fpersonal%2Fmh683%5Fdrexel%5Fedu%2FDocuments%2FResearcher%5FDownloads%2DLegacy%5FCenter%5FArchives%2FBlackWomenPhysicians%2FAlexander%5FVirginia%5FMae%2DBWPP%5Facc178%2DDrexelMedArchives%2Epdf&

parent=%2Fpersonal%2Fmh683%5Fdrexel%5Fedu%2FDocuments%2FResearcher%5FDownloads%2DLegacy%5FCenter%5FArchives%2FBlackWomenPhysicians.

The text gives a biography of Virginia Alexander and explains how *The Doctor Virginia M. Alexander Scholarship Foundation* was formed and created. This was used to show how Alexander inspired the creation of a scholarship foundation to support students of all backgrounds.

Du Bois, William Edward Burghardt. *The Philadelphia Negro*. University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt3fhpfb>.

The Philadelphia Negro was written by famous activist and writer, W.E.B. Du Bois about the life of African Americans in Philadelphia. This source helps us better understand the standpoint of Black physicians at the time, including the view of Black physicians by white and black patients and information about the medical colleges and their graduates in Philadelphia. We quoted this book in our historical context section.

Gay, Eustace. "Facts and Fancies: Memory of Dr. Virginia Alexander Kept Green through Scholarship Aid Fund." *Philadelphia Tribune* (Philadelphia), February 4, 1956. Accessed February 4, 2026.

<https://www.proquest.com/newspapers/facts-fancies/docview/532064775/se-2>.

This is an article written in the Philadelphia Tribune about the Dr. Virginia Alexander Scholarship Aid Foundation. We used it to prove that Dr. Alexander's friends and acquaintances created the foundation to honor her work. We use an image of the article in our short-term significance section.

Germantown Monthly Meeting. Minutes, 1932-1933. 1933. U.S., Quaker Meeting Records, 1681-1935. Friends Historical Library, Swarthmore.

These are pages of the Germantown Monthly Meeting minutes, from 1932-1933 in the U.S. Quaker Meeting Records. We used this to prove Virginia Alexander's effects on the Germantown Monthly meeting racial landscape. We used images of the minutes in our reform section.

Helen O. Dickens. 1950. Photograph.

<https://collections.nlm.nih.gov/catalog/nlm:nlmuid-101413650-img>.

This is a photo of Helen Octavia Dickens in 1950 in the National Library of Medicine Digital Collection. We used this to illustrate Helen O. Dickens in our short-term significance section.

An Image of Dr. Virginia Alexander in a Delivery Room at Aspiranto Health Home. Photograph. Accessed February 16, 2026.

<https://files-profile.medicine.yale.edu/images/5e62b755-ac78-4a58-ba0b-b88675a5548d>.

This is an image of Dr. Virginia Alexander in a delivery room at Aspiranto Health Home. We used this in our Aspiranto section to illustrate what Aspiranto looked like from the inside.

Medical Woman's Journal, July 1949. Accessed March 2, 2026.

https://drexel0-my.sharepoint.com/personal/mh683_drexel_edu/_layouts/15/onedrive.aspx?ga=1&id=%2Fpersonal%2Fmh683%5Fdrexel%5Fedu%2FDocuments%2FResearcher%5FDownloads%2DLegacy%5FCenter%5FArchives%2FBlackWomenPhysicians%2FAlexander%5FVirginia%5FMae%2DBWPP%5Facc178%2DDrexelMedArchives%2Epdf&parent=%2Fpersonal%2Fmh683%5Fdrexel%5Fedu%2FDocuments%2FResearcher%5FDownloads%2DLegacy%5FCenter%5FArchives%2FBlackWomenPhysicians

This is an article in the *Medical Woman's Journal* about Virginia Alexander's Life obtained through the Drexel Legacy Center. We used this to prove that Virginia Alexander had a deep connection and sanctuary in Quakerism. We quoted this in our reform section.

National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. "Can a Colored Woman Be a Physician." *The Crisis*, February 1933, 33-34. png.

This is an article in the NAACP's magazine, *The Crisis*. This article talks about the biography, accomplishments, and struggles of Virginia Alexander. This article was used as evidence of her Aspiranto Health Home and the successes of it.

Baker, Joseph V. "Dr. Alexander in Public Health Hailed." *The Philadelphia Inquirer* (Philadelphia). July 31, 1949. Accessed March 6, 2026.

https://drexel0-my.sharepoint.com/personal/mh683_drexel_edu/_layouts/15/onedrive.aspx?ga=1&id=%2Fpersonal%2Fmh683%5Fdrexel%5Fedu%2FDocuments%2FResearcher%5FDownloads%2DLegacy%5FCenter%5FArchives%2FBlackWomenPhysicians%2FAlexander%5FVirginia%5FMae%2DBWPP%5Facc178%2DDrexelMedArchives%2Epdf&parent=%2Fpersonal%2Fmh683%5Fdrexel%5Fedu%2FDocuments%2FResearcher%5FDownloads%2DLegacy%5FCenter%5FArchives%2FBlackWomenPhysicians

This is a newspaper article talking about Virginia Alexander's accomplishment and written due to her passing. We used this in our reaction section, as an example of the impact of her life on her community and how devastated they were over her passing. In the reaction section we quoted the pilot and health programs mentioned to prove her efforts to fight racial injustice.

Philadelphia Tribune. "Scholarship Fund to Honor Dr. Alexander." March 28, 1953. Accessed February 5, 2026.

<https://www.proquest.com/hnpblacknewscoll/docview/531982631/C05353C4A8CE4185PQ/6?accountid=10977&sourcetype=Newspapers>.

This is an article about the Alexander Scholarship foundation. We used this to prove that Dr. Alexander had a great impact on the people around her, evident through the large number of committee members of this scholarship foundation dedicated to her. An image of the article was used in our short-term significance section.

"Portrait of Virginia Alexander, M.D., 25' Donated by Family at Homecoming." June 1986. Accessed March 1, 2026.

https://drexel0-my.sharepoint.com/personal/mh683_drexel_edu/_layouts/15/onedrive.aspx?id=%2Fpersonal%2Fmh683%5Fdrexel%5Fedu%2FDocuments%2FResearcher%5FDownloads%2DLegacy%5FCenter%5FArchives%2FBlackWomenPhysicians%2FAlexander

%5FVirginia%5FMae%2DBWPP%5Facc178%2DDrexelMedArchives%2Epdf&parent=%2Fpersonal%2Fmh683%5Fdrexel%5Fedu%2FDocuments%2FResearcher%5FDownloads%2DLegacy%5FCenter%5FArchives%2FBlackWomenPhysicians.

This is an article published by the Medical College of Philadelphia in MCP Today that we found in the Drexel Legacy Center. We used this source to prove that she actively fought for the healthcare of her patients in North Philadelphia and her other efforts outside of Philadelphia to decrease healthcare inequality. We quoted this article in our reaction section.

Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, Photographs and Prints Division, The New York Public Library. "National Youth Administration youth assisting doctor in medical examination of children at the St. Simon's Center, Philadelphia" New York Public Library Digital Collections. Accessed March 5, 2026.

<https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/199ba880-c6be-012f-1ecd-58d385a7bc34>

This is an image of a doctor from the National Youth Administration doing medical examinations on children at the St. Simon's Center, Philadelphia. This image provides a visual for the National Youth Administration in our reaction section.

University of Pennsylvania Archives, comp. *Virginia Margaret Alexander Papers*.

A collection of Virginia Alexander's personal documents such as photos, correspondence, her publications, and newspaper articles written about her. This collection also includes photos of her childhood, college years, and her working in various hospitals as well as a portrait of Virginia Alexander. We used these materials to prove how she reformed the understanding of healthcare through her publications and to prove that she led many initiatives as a reaction to inequality in healthcare for African Americans. We used the photos in this collection to provide a visual representation of her life in multiple sections of our website.

U.S Census Bureau. "1910 United States Federal Census." AncestryClassroom.com.

Ancestry.com. Last modified 1910. Accessed March 1, 2026.

https://www.ancestryclassroom.com/imageviewer/collections/7884/images/4450132_00270?pId=128989469.

This is a census in 1910 in Philadelphia's Ward 19. We used this to prove that Alexander lived with her aunt and uncle in Ward 19, in 1910.

Women's Medical College of Pennsylvania. Illustration. Accessed February 1, 2026.

<https://collections.nlm.nih.gov/catalog/nlm:nlmuid-101436211-img>.

This is an illustration of the Women's Medical College of Pennsylvania in the National Library of Medicine collection called *Images from the History of Medicine (IHM)*. We used this in our biography section to illustrate how the Woman's Medical College of Pennsylvania was the major setting for Virginia's College years and where she formally started her activism.

Woodard Photo, Photographer. "Virginia Margaret Alexander (1900-1949), B.S. in Ed. 1920, in "Group Portrait of Hospital Staff." *JSTOR*. <https://jstor.org/stable/community.22109012>.

This is an image of the staff of Wheatley Provident Hospital Kansas city, which includes Virginia Alexander. We used this tool to provide illustration for her time at the hospital as the first Black female intern there.

A WPA Handicraft Class in Chicago. 1936. Photograph. Accessed March 1, 2026.

<https://livingnewdeal.org/racism-and-beyond/new-deal-inclusion/african-americans-2/#gallery/c8fa5d4996bcb5be34299be4b567a466/433>.

This is an image of a Workers Progress Administration teaching a handicraft class to children in Chicago, owned by the National Archives. We used this image to provide visuals to the Workers Progress Administration in our reaction section.

Secondary Sources

American Friends Service Committee. "A Story Incomplete: Virginia Alexander's Life among Friends." American Friend Service Committee. Accessed 2015.

<https://afsc.org/news/story-incomplete-virginia-alexanders-life-among-friends>.

This is a webpage on the American Friends Service Committee, a Quaker Organization that talks about Alexander's involvement in the Quaker Community and her active promotion of racial equality within the Germantown Meeting . We used this source in our "Significance" Tab to prove how influential she was to the Quaker community in Philadelphia.

Butler, Kirstin. "How One Black Doctor Brought the Pap to the People." American Experience. PBS. Last modified March 7, 2024. Accessed December 22, 2025.

<https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/cancer-detectives-helen-dickens/>.

This web-page is an article about Helen Dickens, specifically her work in spreading cancer testing through the promotion of pap smears. We used this article to gather information on Virginia Alexander's effects, as a mentor to Helen Dickens, in the short-term significance section. The article also provides information on Virginia Alexander's Health Home, Aspiranto.

Finlay, Mikaela. "Guardian of the Health of Negro Women': The Work and Legacy of Dr. Virginia Alexander." Legacy Center Archives & Special Collections. Drexel University. Last modified 2020.

<https://drexel.edu/legacy-center/blog/overview/2020/june/guardian-of-the-health-of-negro-women-the-work-and-legacy-of-dr-virginia-alexander/>.

This article is about Virginia Alexander's contribution and life, specifically her connection with the Women's Medical College. We used this to show that Dr. Virginia Alexander fought for health care by creating her own clinic while also inspiring doctors to continue that work.

Gamble, Vanessa. "Outstanding Services to Negro Health': Dr. Dorothy Boulding Ferebee, Dr. Virginia M. Alexander, and Black Women Physicians' Public Health Activism." 2016,

American Journal of Public Health 106 (8): 1397–1404.

<https://doi.org/10.2105/ajph.2016.303252>.

This is a scholarly paper written about the lives of Dorothy Boulding Ferebee and Virginia M. Alexander. We used this to prove that Virginia Alexander pushed for the Race Relations Committee to address medical discrimination and combat against it. We quoted this in our reform section.

Gamble, Vanessa. "Pioneering Health Equity: The Life and Medical Career of Dr. Virginia M. Alexander." Lecture presented at University of Liverpool, Liverpool, United Kingdom, March 11, 2024. mp4 video, 55:59. University of Liverpool. Posted by Centre for the Study of International Slavery, March 14, 2024. Accessed January 29, 2026. <https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/csis/blog/2023/frances-ives-lecture/>.

This is a video of Vanessa Gamble's presentation on Virginia Alexander's life and contributions at the 2024 Frances Ivens Lecture. We used this video as an initial introduction to Virginia Alexander and to provide deeper context into the historical context section and reform Section. We quoted this video in our context section and we used an audio clip from this video in our significance section.

Gamble, Vanessa Northington. *Making a Place for Ourselves: the Black Hospital Movement, 1920-1945*. Oxford University Press, 1995.

"Making a Place for Ourselves: the Black Hospital Movement, 1920-1945" is a book detailing the black hospital movement, an effort by African Americans to build and improve their hospitals during times of segregation from 1920 to 1945. This book provides historical context during the Medical Civil Rights Reform Movement and the time period Virginia Alexander was active. This is used in the "Historical Context" tab.

Gross, Rachel E. "The Female Physician Who Popularised the Pap Smear." BBC. Last modified October 12, 2020. Accessed April 13, 2026. <https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20201012-helen-dickens-the-gynaecologist-who-fought-for-black-women>.

This is an article about Helen Dickens. We used this to prove how Helen Dickens advanced her career in advocacy for Black women after working and learning from Dr. Alexander. We quoted this in our short-term significance section.

Hoffman, Beatrix. "The Medical Civil Rights Movement and Access to Health Care." *Circulation Now*. National Library of Medicine. Last modified January 14, 2016. <https://circulatingnow.nlm.nih.gov/2016/01/14/the-medical-civil-rights-movement-and-access-to-health-care/>.

This is an article about the Civil Rights Movement in the medical field by Black healthcare professionals from 1891 to 1960, mostly focusing on how black medical professions created their own institutions and colleges. We used this to provide information about the medical civil rights groups and institutions for the "Historical Context" tab.

Perelman School of Medicine University of Pennsylvania. "The Helen O. Dickens, MD Presidential Professorship." Perelman School of Medicine University of Pennsylvania. University of Pennsylvania. Accessed March 3, 2026.

<https://www.med.upenn.edu/endowedprofessorships/the-helen-o-dickens-md-presidential-professorship.html>.

This is a webpage that contains a general overview of Helen O. Dickens' life and experiences. We used this to prove that Dr. Dickens created a teen health clinic that offered guidance and help similar to the Aspiranto Health Home.

Pilgrim, Dr. David. "What Was Jim Crow?" *Jim Crow Museum*. Last modified 2010. Accessed April 5, 2026. <https://jimcrowmuseum.ferris.edu/what.htm>.

This is a website discussing Jim Crow. We used this to show what the effects of Jim Crow were in our historical context section.

Wilkerson, Isabel. *The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America's Great Migration*. Random House, 2011.

This is a book chronicling the Great Migration from the times of 1915 to 1970. We used this source to provide a general background on the time period and the events during the time. We quoted this book in our historical context section.