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Mary Ann Shadd Cary: Crafting Black Culture Through Empirical and Moral Arguments

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Abstract

This study examines the rhetoric of educator, journalist, and editor, Mary Ann Shadd Cary (October 9, 1823–June 5, 1893), who vigorously campaigned for Black fugitives' rights in Canada West during the 1850s. Drawing on the 1852 tract, Notes of Canada West, the author analyzes Cary's program of economic advancement and community-building for newly arriving former slaves in Canada. The author argues that Cary was

principle. The author concludes that Cary's significance resides in her attempts to rearrange human knowledge at a pivotal time in Black history, her ability to shape Black behavior around a "radius of trust," her understanding of the relationship between knowledge and the practical art of rhetoric, as well as her keen understanding of how differing notions of human progress compete for attention and potentially influence social policies in significant ways.

KEYTERMS: Mary ann Shadd Cary Black culture community building economic success immigration human capital human knowledge

Mary Ann Shadd Cary was a promiscuous woman. During the mid-19th century, she advanced public discourse at a time when women were supposed to be quiet. Using her trenchant pen, Cary was the first Black female to publish and edit a newspaper in North America, an achievement all the more remarkable if we take into account that the consequences for women expressing themselves publically were perilous. In the 18th and 19th centuries, as Kathleen Jamieson (1988) noted in *Eloquence in an Electronic Age*, women who spoke out were characterized as "scolds," "nags," "shrews," "fishwives," "harpies," "viragos," "bitches," "harridans," "magpies," and "termagants" (p. 68). By imposing upon women a metaphorical social death, such restrictive, indicting language "enjoined sisters to silence" (Jamieson, 1988, p. 68).

Despite the resilience of such negative characterizers, Cary rebelled against attempts to control her voice and, by marshaling primary evidence, became the first Black female to create a rigorous and comprehensive database for propaganda purposes. By database I mean an organized bank of quantitative and philosophical information that formed the conceptual and rhetorical basis for Cary's arguments and actions. In Cary's database we find arguments that confront the realities of the Black experience

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she offered both a cultural diagnosis and an economic remedy for how fugitive slaves could move forward economically and socially, using practical, useful activities such as farming and berry growing to foster human engagement.

As we shall see later, Cary used her storehouse of knowledge to address a question of huge significance: What was most necessary to generate and sustain Black society during the shift from slavery to freedom? The idea of how to treat fugitive slaves has been at the heart of North American political discussion since the 1850s, and is in origin, partly rooted in Cary's analysis of the social conditions of Blacks and their relationship to the larger North American society. For this reason alone, Cary's work needs closer scrutiny.

The medium of journalism formed the crucible for Cary's rhetorical efforts to alter *how* Blacks moved from slavery to social and economic freedom. She not only used her newspaper, *The Provincial Freeman* (1854–1858), as an investigative medium for attacking and exposing unscrupulous antislavery agents who begged on behalf of former slaves, but she also wrote a 44-page pamphlet, *A Plea for Emigration*, or *Notes of Canada West, in its Moral, Social and Political Aspect: With Suggestions Respecting Mexico, W. Indies and Vancouver's Island* (Shadd, 1852; hereafter referred to as *Notes of Canada West*), as a compelling argument for encouraging fugitive slaves to emigrate to Canada during the 1850s.

Cary's journalistic writings (Calloway-Thomas, 2005; Kern-Foxworth & Calloway-Thomas, 2005; Rhodes, 1998; for her activist integrationist views, see Yee, 1997), her abilities to re-imagine notions of gender and race (Peterson, 1995), as well as her difficulties with arch rival Henry Bibb, editor of the *Voice of the Fugitive*, are well–documented. But to my knowledge, no scholarly literature exists on Cary's employment of empirical research to impose order on the lives of the fugitive slaves by addressing quotidian, but essential ecological issues, through the publication of *Notes of Canada West* (1852). This would make her the first influential North American

She published her influential tract 2 years after the passage of the Fugitive Slave Law, which President Fillmore signed into law on September 18, 1850. Historian Paul Johnson (1997) described the Fugitive Slave Law as "The most important sop to the South," as it "made the capture and return of escaped slaves a matter for federal law and rendered it exceedingly difficult, if not impossible, for Northern states to evade their responsibilities under the Constitution" (p. 400). Potentially, passage of the law also meant that former slaves would descend into a cultural and social abyss without the stalwart voice of someone who could choreograph their thoughts and actions coherently. Cary answered the call forthrightly and with keen concern for her fellow humans.

Sensing a mood of anxiety and fear among slaves, and sensing the necessity of using arduous discourse, using personification and appeals to olfaction, Cary provided *Notes of Canada West* to help slaves "learn of the climate, soil and productions, and of the inducements offered generally to emigrants, and to them particularly, since the passage of the odious Fugitive Slave Law has made a residence in the United States to many of them dangerous in the extreme ... " (*Notes of Canada West*, p. iii).

Thus, in the 1840s and 1850s, when African American leaders like Frederick Douglass, Henry Highland Garnet, Henry Bibb, and James McCune Smith were meeting at local, state, and national conventions (Bell, 1960, pp. 11 – 20), Cary published a sizeable authoritative, resource-rich synthesis of the environmental and sociopolitical conditions in Canada West, which addressed an existential primordial question, "How could fugitive slaves succeed without a well-stocked knowledge base of the resources and cultural practices required in Canada West in the 1850s?" And herein, I argue, lies a special appeal of Cary and her work on behalf of fugitive slaves. In this article, I argue that Cary's structured, empirical, and painstaking presentation of the Canadian environment to fugitive slaves was designed not only to serve a practical purpose of urging Black slaves to flee America, but also as a fundamental way of creating a new,

discourses functioned as "databases for action," as well as how they articulated methods for moral and cultural development.

I underline further that in drawing links between community building and the status of fugitive slaves; Cary's *Notes of Canada West* presents a framework for understanding the interaction between geography and Black social progress. Stiglitz (2002, 2006), De Soto (2000), and other scholars convincingly argue that an important challenge to economic prosperity is to "ensure that the public gets as much of the value of the resources that lie beneath its land as possible" (Stigliz, 2006, p. 138).

METHOD

Data

The purpose of this analysis was to examine the potential rhetorical impact of Cary's *Notes of Canada West* upon fugitive slaves in her call for economic and social capital reforms in Canada—a strategy that introduced a unique, quantitative approach to discourse on racial transformation during the 1850s. *Notes on Canada West* was chosen as the premier text because it was the instrumental means Cary used to telegraph the relationship between geography, agrarian-based modes of production and the workings of Black progress. *Notes on Canada West* concentrates specifically on crop rotation, climate factors, animal husbandry, harvest yields, role of the environment, churches and schools, resettlement camps, and other aspects of Canada West that were essential to the production of Black economic and social capital. By social capital I mean capability that "is usually created and transmitted through cultural mechanisms like religion, tradition, or historical habit" (Fukumaya, 1995, p. 26). Fukuyama (1995) argued further that "Acquisition of social capital ... requires habituation to the moral

To add richness to the findings, and to provide a comprehensive approach, all information published in *Notes of Canada West was* subject to scrutiny, as well as biographical information and articles from Cary's newspaper, *The Provincial Freeman*.

Analysis

Using *Notes on Canada West* as a chief database site to guide the identification of economic and sociocultural topics, a critical thematic frame was used to uncover the main topics and their relationship to Black progress. Conceptually, this involved clustering together qualitatively alike content and ideas for comparison and for implicative rhetorical purposes. Analysis focused on specific topics, modes of argument, quantitative data, comparison and contrast, the presence of supporting materials, and the relationship between argument and the assertions Cary put forth as claims. Stephen E. Toulmin (1958) in his *The Uses of Argument* maintained that "A man who makes an assertion puts forward a claim—a claim on our attention and to our belief. Unlike one who speaks frivolously, jokingly or only hypothetically (under the rubric 'let us suppose' ...) a man who asserts something intends his statement to be taken seriously" (pp. 11–12). Furthermore, Toulmin argued there are *pathways* that individuals are likely follow if they wish their claims to be clustered in a must be "take seriously" vein, with emphasis on both implicit and explicit claims. The task of the rhetorical critic is to examine a writer's propositions for claim-making behavior and for a meshing between "goodness of fit," assertions and exigencies.

Toulmin's conception of an argument is precisely what Cary's rhetoric signifies because she perceived her *Notes of Canada West* as one meant seriously to modify Black human existence in reordering the experiences, perceptions and behaviors of Black fugitive slaves. This is a lens a rhetorical critic needs when approaching the written content of a literary tract. At this stage of the analysis, the specific themes and headings that Cary used to describe the presence or absence of Black progress in

—with specific emphasis on the strategic, rhetorical uses she made of concepts and explications. That is, how, and to what extent, she harnessed themes to some philosophical, cultural, or economic benefit for Black fugitive slaves.

Social and Cultural Capital

The examination of *Notes of Canada West* resulted in the identification of three major spatial and political zones of influence—all urgently designed to produce social and cultural capital for Blacks in Canada West. The three zones are environmental geography, cultural geography and moral and political geography, and they provided an insightful way of comprehending Cary's rhetorical construction of Black social and economic community-building in Canada. The word *geography* is used here as a container metaphor to explicate the spatial dimensions of Cary's discourse on immigration and what she imagined the country would become for fugitive slaves, creating a bond between land and the socio-cultural activities of Afro-Canadians.

The analysis proceeds in three phases. The first section examines Cary's background and explains the animating forces that contributed to her exceptional zeal on behalf of the fugitive slaves. Building on this section, the second portion discusses in turn the three intersecting spatial and political zones of influence that Cary developed to help the fugitive slaves craft social and cultural capital. Attempting to understand the nature and history of Cary's *uses of indispensable information* should help us comprehend the roots of human capital in Black culture and, by extension, learn under what conditions some Blacks succeeded and under what conditions they failed. Human capital refers to how individuals use knowledge, attitudes, lifestyles, and other skill-building forms to advance or retard their cultural progress (Sowell, 1996). The concluding section highlights findings, racial and economic factors, and the research implications that follow from the analysis.

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In his commentary on the place of Blacks in North American society, George M. Frederickson (1971) argued that "By improving themselves and becoming model citizens, the free blacks would destroy the identification that existed in the public mind between the Negro and the degraded slave" (p. 40). By extension, Frederickson encapsulated what reformers wanted to achieve for the fugitive slaves. His statement also suggests that an efficient, robust process facilitates movement toward good social and economic results. A chief architect of attempts to erect a new culture for fugitive slaves was educator, rhetor, and editor, Mary Ann Shadd Cary (Calloway-Thomas, 2005), who arrived in Canada West in the 1850s at a crucial moment for fugitive slaves. Benjamin Quarles (1969a) described Cary as "The chief protagonist of Canadian emigration" (p. 217). In Cary, Canada witnessed the arrival of not only its first Black female editor, but an ardent reformer who produced an arresting defense of the fugitive slave. Unlike many free Blacks, Cary was a member of the Black elite, moistened by an intellectual environment that created a quintessentially middle-class Black family.

Born in Wilmington in Delaware (October 9, 1823–June 5, 1893), "Slender and somewhat tall, Miss Shadd (Cary) combined an attractive femininity with an imperious manner, a combination enabling her to overawe a hostile audience or to outstare a segregationist-minded street car conductor" (Quarles, 1969a, p. 217). This "imperious" woman's early experience as one of 13 children born to Harriet and Abraham Shadd, an agent of the Underground Railroad, created a mind-set which fostered an understanding of and empathy for the ex-slaves that her father and other abolitionists led to freedom (Bearden & Butler, 1977, p. 11). Mary Ann also developed an assiduous understanding of the issues, as well as a penchant for lively debate. As a consequence, she would likely have joined conversations among Black leaders who understood the life of slaves and who could give encyclopedic accounts of the withering conditions of Blacks in North America.

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Canada or the States, she is perfectly familiar; having studied the questions with absorbing interest from childhood" (*The Provincial Freeman,* December 1, 1855). When Cary was 10, her family moved to West Chester, Pennsylvania where Cary spent the next 6 years in a Quaker school. In 1840, she returned to Wilmington and opened a school for Black children, and later secured teaching appointments in New York City and Norristown, Pennsylvania.

In the 1850s, Cary established an integrated school in Canada West supported by the American Missionary Association, one of several leading abolitionist-leaning White organizations. Cary was one of only seven Blacks to serve in the foreign field (Quarles, 1969a, p. 79). That rhetorical spot would serve as the stamping ground where Cary would accumulate masses of materials and observations that sharpened her opposition to the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850. The latter measure "became a powerful propaganda weapon for the abolitionists, who referred to it as "the Man-Stealing Law" and the "Bloodhound Bill" (Quarles, 1969b, p. 107).

In 1851, at the height of the Black exodus to Canada following the passage of the Fugitive Slave Law, Cary launched her campaign to promote Black immigration to Canada West (Bearden & Butler, 1977, p. 25). To understand Cary's zones of discourse, it is necessary to highlight the impact of the Fugitive Slave Law upon the social status of Blacks. Historian John Hope Franklin (1960) argued that it "stimulated the migration of Negroes into Canada more than anything else" (p. 362). According to Berry and Blassingame (1982), "The passage of the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850 produced a sharp upsurge in calls for violence" by free Blacks (p. 62). Moreover, according to Berry and Blassingame (1982), "Death to the Tyrants became a rallying cry of the free blacks" (p. 62). Quarles (1969a) estimated that after the passage of the bill some 3,000 Blacks left for Canada, and that "in the ten years after 1850 the number reached over fifteen thousand" (p. 217).

361). Out of this uneasy feeling emerged rhetorical strategies that slaveholders used to portray Canada in unfavorable ways. The slaveholders sought to evoke negative images, "with emphasis on the fact that Negroes simply could not live in a land that abounded in snow during the entire year" (Franklin, 1960, p. 361). In spite of the fact that White southerners depicted Canada as "a long way off" with "poor soil" and "wild geese which scratched one's eyes out," Negro slaves, either out of distrust of their master or because they preferred pleasant stories and possibilities to bondage, believed that Canada was a country that promoted liberty and democracy.

Cary, realizing that a counterargument was necessary to challenge such external negativity, crafted *Notes of Canada West* as a rebuttal to the virulent stories about the region that southern slaveholders circulated to thwart Black immigration. In the process of responding to the negative narratives emanating from southern presses, Cary accumulated an abundance of evidence to sustain her arguments, presented the escaped slaves with a collective perception of Canada, as well as stressed the mental templates that Blacks needed for economic and social development. Michael Fairbanks (2000) in "Changing the Mind of a Nation: Elements in a Process for Creating Prosperity," maintained that "Prosperity is the ability of an individual, group or nation to provide shelter, nutrition, and other material goods that enable people to live a good life, according to their own definitions" (p. 170). Cary, undoubtedly, had her own ideas about what constituted progress for fugitive slaves and she outlined her positions forthrightly in *Notes of Canada West* starting with the fiercest sense of urgency, "the passage of the odious Fugitive Slave Law" (p. iii). This was her "excuse for offering this tract to the notice of the public" (p. iii). Capturing the social and political bind that she felt fugitive slaves found themselves in, Cary (Shadd, 1852) argued:

> The people are in a strait—on the one hand, a pro-slavery administration with its entire controllable force, is bearing upon them with fatal effect; on the other, the Colonization Society, in the garb of *Christianity*, is seconding

(p. iii, italics in original)

ENVIRONMENTAL GEOGRAPHY

Climate and Soil

In her meticulous empirical/moral report on matters such as climate, soil, timber, clearing lands, grains, potatoes, fruits, vines, berries, domestic animals, game, prices of land, labor, trades, churches, schools, settlements, political roots, and election laws, Cary left no stone unturned as she presented her case to the public for scrutiny. While boldly claiming that she "hoped to give ... such evidence as will substantiate (her) assertion," Cary provided a climate table "setting forth the greatest degree of cold and heat, in the years mentioned," meaning from 1840 to 1847 (*Notes of Canada West*, p. 7). To create a compelling argument, she was obliged not only to cite climatic data, but also provide ample evidence to justify her claims. With numerical precision, based on an implied consultation with scientific organizations, Cary observed that in 1840 the greatest degree of heat was 82° Fahrenheit and the lowest degree of cold was 18° Fahrenheit (*Notes of Canada West*, p. 7).

Cary's discourse suggests that she was not only mindful of the importance of linguistic precision, but that she also wanted to present an objective and trustworthy argument. The important point is that she accounted for patterns of data to substantiate her claim that weather was "superior" in Canada.

A significant feature of Cary's rigorous analysis is that it potentially extended well beyond the citation of evidence and reasoning from it. To borrow the words of Fairbanks (2000), she helped to "create space in people's hearts and minds;" in this instance, she provided the newly arriving slaves with a metric for acquiring new knowledge (p. 170). Although Cary's efforts were real, and although she exploited

resides another potent aspect of Cary's two-fold rhetoric: to balance the recurring propaganda emanating from the South as regards the goodness-of-fit between Canada and the fugitive slaves and to change the minds of the fugitive slaves simultaneously. Cary undoubtedly relied robustly on oral communication (sometimes referred to as the "chitterling circuit") pushed underground to get her message to illiterate slaves. As Smith (1972) wrote, "In part because of strict antiliteracy laws during slavery, vocal communication became for a much greater proportion of blacks than whites the fundamental medium of communication" (p. 296).

Crucially, Cary placed climate at the center of her argument because she realized that climate change (Diamond, 2005) affects a great deal of human behavior from year to year, and from human activities to population control. Diamond noted, for example the effect that the volcanic eruption of Indonesia's Mt. Tiambora had on subsequent generations. The eruption blackened sunlight from reaching the ground, "causing widespread famine even in North America" (Diamond, 2005, p. 12). Scientists and economists have long argued that temperate zone cultures are more productive environmentally than tropical zone countries. As Sachs (2005) noted, "The burden of infectious disease is higher in the tropics than in the temperate zones" (p. 32). These important economic factors notwithstanding, perhaps the biggest reason why Cary privileged climate concerns the stereotypes and stigma associated with Blacks and climate. Implicitly, to Cary's way of thinking, the unflattering idea that Blacks' DNA inclined them toward a warmer climate (think Africa!) was unsustainable.

In making her case, Cary also answered a compelling question about the relationship that obtains between climate, soil, and resources: "Why should one care?" Clearly, she understood the powerful role that soil played in yielding high agricultural production and that the land must be endowed with rich mineral resources for economic growth. She decided that it was in the fugitive slaves' financial and long-term interests to value the soil. Sowell (1996), in *Migrations and Culture*, summed up what Cary probably had in

that are possible" (p. 13).

For purposes of environmental contrast, Cary's rhetorical approach was to lodge in the minds of the slaves the fact that Canadian soil was "rich, dark and heavy," with "depth" (*Notes of Canada West*, p. 9), and to plant in their minds the opposite of what was true in the United States. Cary pushed the ideology that success in Canada was within the reach of Blacks, and as a consequence, she discussed "putting land in a state to receive a crop," and she presented tables listing bushels of wheat, buckwheat, rye, oats, barley, Indian corn, and potatoes that would sustain the fugitive slaves in Canada West (*Notes of Canada West*, p. 11). As Grondona (2000) argued, "all economic values are instrumental," meaning that they are means to an end (p. 45).

But Cary did not stop with ample descriptions of the rich soil in Canada; rather, she elaborated on the fact that such bountiful natural resources if used well would keep fugitive slaves "out of debt" and "give place to wealth" through methodical self-discipline (*Notes of Canada West*, pp. 10–11). Nothing escaped Cary's efforts to find the facts in all essentials, including the production of fruits and berries.

Fruits and Berries

When discoursing about the fruit and berry-growing potential of Canada West, she declared resolutely, "Canada is emphatically a fruit country" (*Notes of Canada West*, p. 12). She claimed that "the fruits of New York, Michigan and New Jersey, have long been famous" (*Notes of Canada West,* p. 12). However, if one used confirming "fairly instituted" comparative data, according to Cary, "pre-eminence will be the award to the Province" in Canada (*Notes of Canada West*, p. 12). Using a combination of vivid and cumulative descriptors, Cary wrote that "apples grow in abundance, wild and cultivated, from the diminutive crab to the highly flavored bell-flower and pippin;" in a word, the yields were "incredible!" (*Notes of Canada West*, p. 12). Hence, she argued that her patterns of data citations and explanations were good and sensibly arranged and

West, both thought and research explanation included. Her rhetorical movement from a database to meaning-construction also extended legitimately to the animal kingdom!

Beasts of Burden

From the standpoint of beasts of burden, she mentioned horses, cattle, sheep, prices of beef, mutton, veal, pork, and other meats per pound, as well as chickens, turkeys, and geese as available resources for the fugitive slaves to develop entrepreneurial finesse in Canada West. The data that she selected to help the former slaves "understand fully the resources of the Canadas," included "quantity and quality, for labor or other purposes," with a view of "the well stocked farms with their swarms of horses, oxen, cows, sheep and hogs" (*Notes of Canada West*, p. 13). To sustain the currency of her ideas, Cary sharp and linguistically as straight as a ramrod, dared "those skeptical on (her) points," to "repay a visit to the country," where "quality and abundance" abounded (*Notes of Canada West*, p. 13). She cited the prices for beef ("4 and 5 cts"), mutton ("5 cents"), and pork ("5 and 6 cents") (*Notes of Canada West*, p. 13). Significantly, Cary's coverage of needful things for the fugitive slaves was abundant.

MORAL AND POLITICAL GEOGRAPHY

Religion and Moral Boundary-Jumping

Sustaining a livelihood in Canada was one of the most important issues that confronted the fugitive slave, and Cary was likely most cognizant, because she elevated terms such as "the inducements offered generally to emigrants" as rhetorical vehicles for bending the minds of slaves toward independent modes of existence (*Notes of Canada West*, p. iii). But Cary also believed that economic sustainability and moral codes of conduct are bound together like exquisite coral. With this idea in mind, she struck hard against what she termed the "Negro Pew," or "other seats for Colored

Blacks and Whites. Philosophically, she treated separation of the races as a culprit, as a sure-fire way of guaranteeing that the fugitive slaves would erode their moral and religious values.

Toward this end, she fought vigorously for moral boundary-jumping; in fact, Cary's less than sanguine attitudes toward Black "folk religion" is rooted in her attitudes about Black clergy, whom she viewed as exhorters and conjurers. In an editorial in *The North Star* (1849, March 23), Cary wrote, "The influence of a corrupt clergy among us, (is) sapping our every means, and compensation, inculcating ignorance as a duty, superstition as true religion—in short, hanging like millstones about our necks, should be faithfully proclaimed." Furthermore, she accused Black clergy of being culturally oppressive and collectively strong:

> It does really seem to me that our distinctive churches, and the frightfully wretched Institution of our ministers—their gross ignorance and insolent bearing, together with the sanctimonious garb, and by virtue of their calling, a character for the mystery they assume, is attributable more of the down-right degradation of the free colored people of the North than from the effect of corrupt public opinion. (*The North Star*, 1859)

Such harsh opinions written 3 years prior to the publication of *Notes of Canada West* served as a rhetorical genealogy for Cary's subsequent work.

The most notable feature of Cary's comments about folk religion is not necessarily her scathing tone, but rather recognition that religion and morality conditioned the mind and facilitated or retarded human progress. Cary, like many of the Black elite, distanced herself from emotionality and what she deemed the drama-centered minutiae of African American stylistic expressions. Of course, what Cary disdained as "folk religion" contained elements of the Black expressive mode within it. Both Asante (1987) and Mitchell (1970) commented on the way Black speakers and preachers

he knows to his Black congregation" (p. 177). The "sounding good" quality, "rhythm and stylin" symbolic mannerisms and cadences, all according to Asante (1987), are "a basic measure of the successful speech" in African American culture (p. 38).

There was a deeper concern here. In this regard, one can better understand why Cary considered integrated churches to be a moral bulwark against the perpetuation of ignorance among escaped slaves. A historically driven and deeply rooted belief in the "right ways" of White Canadians undoubtedly and inherently convinced Cary of the virtues of White religion and worship. And such a view led her to degrade Black expressive modes of communication. She believed there was an interaction effect upon Black culture, that is, a relationship between where Blacks worshiped and the moral values they learned and kept. Cary's piercing claim undoubtedly was centered in the metaphysics of racial prejudice and anti-Black images that "found their way into public consciousness and political rhetoric" at the height of the most virulent forms of racism in the 1850s, implicitly seducing fugitive slaves to internalize such norms (Takaki, 1990, p. 113).

Settlements and Economic Development

It is at once apparent that in the process of stressing community and moral capital, Cary expressed doubts about Black housing settlements in Canada West, including Dawn and Elgin. Settlements in such places were designed to assist the fugitive slaves in finding affordable, clean, and decent housing. The settlements functioned like relocation centers. Cary objected to "exclusive settlements" on the grounds that they encouraged dependency and promoted distorted, stereotypical images of the fugitive slave. In *Notes of Canada West*, she maintained that "due attention to moral and intellectual culture has been given; the former prejudices on the part of whites, has given place to a perfect reciprocity of religious and social intercommunication" (*Notes of Canada West*, p. 22). To demonstrate the potency of her argument, using what she considered to be fact-based reasoning, with a positive regard for Black decision-

and, as before said ... all visit in common the Presbyterian church, there established" (*Notes of Canada West*, p. 22). This is crucial, because what the preceding quote suggests is that Cary had specific proof that skill-building, moral development, civic virtue, and new habits of mind were paying off for Blacks. And she wanted to reinforce the fact for maximum benefit for Black progress.

Cary argued further concerning the Elgin and Dawn settlements that "Schools are patronized equally; the gospel is common, and hospitality is shared alike by all," and that the new sites for fugitive slaves were "exceedingly flourishing and the moral influence (they) exerted ... (was) good" (*Notes of Canada West*, p. 22). Here again is where and how Cary decoded her strategies for Black advancement. *Notes of Canada West* is replete with allusions to and statements about negative consequences of what she termed *caste institutions*, (i.e., Black organizations and institutions that were separate from White institutions).

As a crusader, Cary used one terrifically effective technique to advance Black progress; negatively, she essentialized settlements that seemed in opposition to what she thought was necessary for building moral capital. This is particularly striking in her discussions of the "begging system," which she tenaciously argued fostered dependency. How could the fugitive slaves forge new values and develop modern, progressive-minded ideas and practices in the midst of a tyrannically undermining begging system? The begging system was a technique that ministers and other anti-slavery agents used to secure funds, clothing, and other items to help sustain Blacks while they were being settled in Canada.

Using her sharpest language, she claimed further that "The cry that has been often raised, that we could not support ourselves, is a foul slander, got up by our enemies, and circulated both on this and the other side of the line, to our prejudice" (*Notes of Canada West,* p. 32). One cannot escape observing that in Cary's view, the linkages between building human capital and having the substance with which to develop and

confirm her explanations, and appealing to the "stereotypical" dogma that was rampant in the United States in the 1850s, Cary claimed that "There are upwards of thirty thousand colored persons in Canada West, and not more than three thousand of them have ever received aid, and not more than half of them required it had they been willing to work" (*Notes of Canada West*, p. 32). Thus, her rhetoric indicates that she tried to inculcate Protestant and republican values as a way of granting the former slaves a new and stereotypically-free ethos shorn of old, musty and demeaning depictions of Blacks as "lazy," "ignorant," and "childish," that were abundant in the United States.

Political Rights

While she elevated demonstrably the differences between the old slaves fleeing the plantation system in antebellum South and those arriving in Canada West, Cary knew that entrepreneurial job skills and moral attitudes needed to be wedded to civic virtue. With this view, she provided the fugitive slaves with a catechism for understanding the role of politics in shaping their lives in Canada West. Writing under the rubric of "political rights, election law-oath-currency" in Notes *of Canada West*, Cary explained laws to the fugitive slaves as regards the following categories: laws regulating elections, property qualifications, modes of legal redress, and the virtual absence of prejudice in Canada. For example, under the heading of census-taking, she argued "There is no difference made whatever ; and even in the slight matter of taking the census it is impossible to get at the exact number of whites or colored, as they are not designated as such" (*Notes of Canada West*, p. 27).

Cary habitually supposed that if Blacks were to prosper they needed to know a lot about political efficacy, and when, where, and how to adhere to the rule of law. This included knowing how things worked, including for example, the age that one was allowed to vote ("the full age of twenty-one") in Upper and Lower Canada, legal titles that were necessary for owning property, laws of succession (the "role of lineal descendants"), as well as laws of inheritance (*Notes of Canada West,* pp. 29–30).

slaves to live well in civil society. Furthermore, using her quantitative intellectual prowess, she provided the fugitive slaves with knowledge about how to donate clothing, "seeds of all kinds, farming utensils and implements of husbandry," accompanied by a "Currency of Canada" table. There, she provided what in today's international parlance constitutes systems of exchange rates among countries. For example, she compared and contrasted the silver "British Crown" against the U.S. dollar, also in silver dimensions (*Notes of Canada West,* p. 29).

Geopolitics

What other conceptual gems did Cary offer Blacks? To solidify her points and further mobilize the minds of the fugitive slaves, relying on simple comparison and contrasts between the Canadas and the United States, she turned finally to geopolitics. According to her, the policy of the "dominant party" in the United States was to "drive free colored people out of the country, and to send them to Africa" (*Notes of Canada West*, p. 37). Cary accused the United States of a capacious extension of its flawed "rule of law" into the "West Indies, Honduras, and ultimately South America" (*Notes of Canada West*, p. 37). In the United States, the social goal was to "consecrate to slavery and the slave power that portion of this continent; at the same time they deprecate the vicinity of freemen" (*Notes of Canada West*, p. 37). And to forestall that possibility, Cary exhorted free Blacks to check the geographical advancement of the United States and praised Britain for "promptly and effectually checking foreign interference in its own policy and any mischievous designs now in contemplation toward Cuba and Hayti" (*Notes of Canada West*, p. 37).

In an affirming manner, Cary placed Britain on a pedestal for admiration because she wanted to paint a clear and compelling picture of the best place for emigrants to settle in the Americas, and she omitted much of America, including Mexico because politics there were perceived to be lacking in virtuous practice (*Notes of Canada West,* p. 40). For example, in Cary's sneering and indicting view, Mexicans had no "scruples about a

"People who love liberty do not emigrate to weak governments to embroil themselves in their quarrels with stronger ones" (*Notes of Canada West,* p. 41). Such astute geopolitical observations go to the heart of discourse functioning in the context of community formation, creating links among "political, cultural, psychological, and psychoanalytic concerns" (Gilroy, 2000, p. 101). For Cary, such understandings also made effective action for Blacks possible across a range of themes and topics, including the realization that Afro-Canadians could shape the world order decisively. Cary singled out the geopolitical marketplace in "Vancouver's Island" as a strategic site for marketplace competition because it was a "stopping place for whale ships visiting the Northern Seas" and because it was "directly in the route to the East Indies, Japan Isles, and China, from Oregon and British America" (*Notes of Canada West*, p. 43).

Cary's understanding of how trade barriers can erect obstacles to development is in keeping with views that many economists support: evidence that the size of markets, proximity, and access to navigiable waters, comparative advantage, human capital, as well as incentives for innovation can raise a country's productivity significantly (Sachs, 2005, p. 61).

Using her métier, Cary simply could not accept the idea of Blacks immigrating to countries that had mortgaged their own economic future so early in the process of nation-building. What chance would fugitive slaves have in such curtailing environments? It is clear that social rupture, turmoil, and conflict can have de-stabilizing effects on humans' "economic possibilities" (Sachs, 2005). Sachs listed the extent to which countries manage soil nutrients, control diseases, specialize in high farming, save, and produce excellent roads, as key reasons "Why Some Countries Fail to Thrive" (pp. 52–61).

It is hard to state with intellectual certitude the specific impact that Cary's treatise had on Black culture in the 1850s and subsequently. However, from a Black communicative standpoint, this rhetorical examination shows that Cary tapped into a well-spring of strategic solutions to the myriad of problems Blacks confronted in their uphill struggle from slavery to freedom. The possibility exists that the rhetorical techniques Cary used could be useful for helping shape discourse structures about Black culture in general. Here, I distill from Cary's efforts to change Blacks' "mental models of reality" several themes that offer insights into her rhetoric and, by extension, what the insights reveal about the potential for Black cultural and economic advancement.

First, Cary's significance resides in her uses of human knowledge at a pivotal time in Black history. Here it is possible to argue that Cary built an essential and organized body of knowledge, which she bequeathed to Blacks. This fact alone is a testament to her rhetorical innovation augmented by a compelling need to make the experiences of the fugitive slaves fundamentally livable in Canada West in the 1850s. Historical and rhetorical records acknowledge the fact that Blacks who spoke on behalf of the slaves "faced a double burden of prejudice" (Foner & Branham, 1998, p. 7).

Second, implicitly, Cary's discourse suggests that she recognized that differing views of the causes of human progress compete for attention and potentially influence social policies in significant ways. And, on behalf of Blacks, she wanted her views and programs to be on the frontline of policy formations in Canada West. This is why her rhetorical and programmatic efforts to move fugitive slaves forward matter so much.

Finally, Cary's rhetoric and actions helped change the cultural meanings of things for Blacks. She opted to arrange evidence, claims, and assumptions based on a rich quantitative research model for changing the hearts and minds of the fugitive slaves who fled to Canada. And one sees here the role that rhetorical juxtaposition plays in contrasting what is against what could be as a way to raise Black prosperity. Thus, my

that point, attempted to rearrange Black human knowledge using a research-based approach pitted against the collective uses of the slaves' cultural past.

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