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African-American Christian Female Missionaries in Nyasaland, Congo, and Liberia: Perpetuation and Resistance at the Intersections of Blackness, Gender, Disability, and Christianity

Karen Yvette Dace

The University of San Francisco

AFRICAN-AMERICAN CHRISTIAN FEMALE MISSIONARIES IN NYASALAND, CONGO, AND LIBERIA: PERPETUATION AND RESISTANCE AT THE INTERSECTIONS OF BLACKNESS, GENDER, DISABILITY, AND CHRISTIANITY

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Dissertation Abstract

African-American Christian Female Missionaries in Nyasaland, Congo, and Liberia: Perpetuation and Resistance at the Intersections of Blackness, Gender, Disability, and Christianity

Events are taking place in the United States today regarding blackness, gender, disability, and Christianity, and the perceived place of those with black and brown bodies. Current efforts have focused on blackness and gender, blackness and disability, gender and disability, and disability and Christianity; but there has not been concerted efforts focusing on the historical intersections of blackness, gender, disability, and Christianity and how these intersections help in understanding the contemporary black social movement and the climate in which we now live.

The purpose of this qualitative study sought to understand the narratives of Christian mission agencies and how African-American Christian women in the late 1800s and early 1900s were shaped by these narratives. The study also sought to understand how these women perpetuated and resisted the idea of these narratives in Liberia, Congo, and Nyasaland and the implications for black women in today's America.

There are several major findings of this study: (1) White mission agencies misrepresented Africans as disabled, dependent, and uncivilized and in need of civilizing, (2) African-American Christian female missionaries' lived experiences in Africa changed over time, from affirming white Christian mission agencies false representations about Africans to refuting those representations, and (3) African-American Christian missionaries posed threats to the political, gender, and social hierarchy of white missionaries in Africa.

In light of the findings, as Giddings remarked, black women "must search our history for an answer to the question, who are we as ourselves…the faith in progress that our forebears taught was not only in terms of our status in society, but in our ability to gain increasing control of our own lives". It may be a new beginning for all, as a modern-day rendering of Isaiah reads, in part – "Those who are oppressed will be encouraged and enabled to free themselves. Abilities rather than disabilities will be what counts. All who are blind to their own and others' oppression will come to new insights. And God will pardon all at the jubilee. That is liberation."

This dissertation, written under the direction of the candidate's dissertation committee and approved by the members of the committee, has been presented to and accepted by the Faculty of the School of Education in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education. The content and research methodologies presented in this work represent the work of the candidate alone.

___Karen Yvette Dace_____ ___30 April 2019_____
Candidate Date

Dissertation Committee

__Dr. Emily Nusbaum_____ ____30 April 2019_____
Chairperson

__Dr. Candice Harrison_____ ____30 April 2019_____

__Dr. Nicola McClung_____ ____30 April 2019_____

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INTRODUCTION

No race can afford to neglect the enlightenment of its mothers.
- Francis Ellen Watkins Harper

Although Amanda Berry was born into slavery in 1837, she was too young to remember her experience. She did recall that "they [her owners] were getting me ready for market, but I didn't know it…Two of the young ladies of our family were to be married, and as my brother and myself were the oldest of the children, one of us would have gone to one, and one to the other, as a dowry" (1893, pp. 22-23). Berry Smith credited God for her deliverance from slavery, and stated, "But how God moves in a mysterious way…the Lord did provide, and my father was permitted to purchase our freedom" (p.23).

At seventeen, Amanda Berry married the first of her two husbands, and at eighteen became very ill. Miss Berry's father told her, "Amanda, my child, you know the doctors say you must die; they can do no more for you, and now my child you must pray" (Berry Smith, 1893, p. 42). She did not want to pray and "fell asleep…or seemed to go into a kind of trance or vision" (p. 42). "When I came out of it I was decidedly better…Then I made up my mind to pray and lead a Christian life. I thought God had spared me for a purpose, so I meant to be converted, but in my own way quietly" (p. 43). Miss Berry's first husband passed away, and some years later she married Mr. Smith, a deacon and ordained minister in the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church. After her husband died in 1869, she would go on to become one of the most well-known Black Christian female missionaries in the nation. As Taylor, a Methodist Episcopal pastor, remarked in 1888, there is not a state in the United States that could find a Negro woman

with a love of race, sex, and self which is truly praiseworthy and distinguishing. There have been four since 1620 – Wheatley, Truth, Harper, & Smith. Wheatley was a poetic genius, Truth a revolutionist reformer, Harper a scholarly agitator, and [Amanda Berry] Smith, a Christian of the highest type, unequaled among women of any race (pp. 53 - 59).

Over the course of her life, Amanda Berry Smith, like all African American female missionaries, was shaped by the narratives of blackness, gender, disability, and Christianity, and those narratives were constructed by the institution of slavery. Both black men and women endured slavery, but the woman's experience was different than that of the man's. It was a legal curse to be a black woman, and the status of the mother determined the status of the child (Clark Hine & Thompson, 1998, pp.35-37). Women were used and misused as sexual objects and concubines at the pleasure of the master, the overseer, the master's sons, and other males. Those women who resisted were beaten, disabled, or sometimes killed (Collier-Thomas, 2010).

Enslaved women were chattel, and thus they had a double challenge – "they had to resist the property relation…and they had to inculcate the same values into succeeding generations" (Giddings, 1984, p. 43). Parents worked hard to instill self-respect in their children to ward off the attacks on the childrens' sense of self-worth (Clark Hine & Thompson, 1998; Giddings, 1984, p. 44). The women developed community, which was a powerful skill that black women have mastered, along with the skill of protection of the inner person. Slave women had two personas – the face shown to the master and the inner place of self-respect (Clark Hine & Thompson, 1998, pp. 55-73). Slave women fought strongly against sexual exploitation, but one group, those chosen for sexual work, were powerless and forced to participate in slave prostitution. When the women became

pregnant, some ended the child's life rather than let the child be a slave. "Slavery oppressed every black person in America" (pp. 94-103), and black women were doubly oppressed. Dissembling became a valued skill.

Free black women, like Maria Stewart, became leaders in the abolitionist movement, sought to instill racial pride, and urged women to refute the white myth that said that black women were degenerate, ignorant, and lazy (Clark Hine & Thompson, 1998, p.106; Polter, J., 2007, pp. 22-26). Her message was one of economic independence and self-determination. Other free black women bought slaves and then freed them. Literature and arts also became a priority, and education was seen as the "salvation of the race" (Clark Hine & Thompson, 1998, p. 122). Teaching was a calling, a service to their own. Black women were also active in the Civil War and participated in several ways: at the battle sites, nursing the wounded; as cooks, laundresses, and spies; in the propaganda effort raising funds; and as teachers, preparing slaves for a free life (pp. 128-140).

After the Civil War ended in 1865, life did not change much for black women, and freedom was very limited. Even so, in the first ten years after the War, there was the first black female lawyer, doctor, and sculptor; there were two black females who pioneered the black theatre; black churches sprang up; and a large number of children and adults became literate. Blacks had three goals after manumission – find family, make a living, and live lives that did not resemble slavery. To find family, black women traveled, searching for their children. Living a life that did not resemble slavery was difficult, as the only jobs available in the South were those that were held in slavery. Sharecropping, farming land that belonged to someone else for a part of the crop, became

the chosen way of life (Clark Hine & Thompson, 1998, pp. 143-152; Giddings, 1984, p. 57). In 1866, some manumitted slaves were given land, between forty and one hundred sixty acres, the only instance of land redistribution to manumitted slaves after the Civil War.

During the ten years of Reconstruction (1867-1877), the 13th Amendment, the 14th Amendment, and the 15th Amendment were passed, and African-Americans "enjoyed a degree of political power and self-determination they had not known before and have not known since" (Clark Hine & Thompson, 1998, p. 155). Gender equality was evident in the black community, something to be proud of, and something that helped explain why activist black women put aside suffrage until the black man was allowed to vote – the women saw it as a shared vote (p. 159). Educating the race became a focal point, and many educated women "left behind comfortable homes, good prospects, and even love and marriage to fulfill what they believed was their duty and their destiny" (p. 160).

Yet the promises of Reconstruction went unfilled and by the late 1870s, a campaign of terror began, creating three obstacles for black women: law, custom, and violence. This was the era of Jim Crow, and education was a target, with segregated schools being the law of the land, and cemented in 1896 with the Plessy vs. Ferguson decision of separate but equal. In addition, not a day went by where blacks were not harassed, intimidated, or killed so that their rights could not be exercised. In the late 1800s and early 1900s, lynching became the representation of white domination, and the rape, threat of rape, and domestic violence had an effect on the psychic development of black women. Historically and legally, rape originated as a crime of property, and during Reconstruction and the Jim Crow era, black women were raped with impunity, resulting

in many African Americans leaving the South (Clark Hine & Thompson, 1998, pp. 167-184).

The stereotypical negative image of black females, that they were immoral and lacked integrity, had devastating consequences by the late 1800s. Black women were held responsible for the entire black race, and "all black women were perceived in the light of those who had the fewest resources and the least opportunity" (Giddings, 1984, p. 97). Black female activists like Ida B. Wells "challenged presumptions of the immorality of black women" and publicly defended the integrity of black women, which "opened the way for the next stage of their political development" (Giddings, 1984, pp. 31-97).

The heart of the freed black community became the Christian church, and throughout the 19th century black women were the chief fundraisers for the church and for mission work. African Methodist Episcopal (AME) women started the Women's Parent Mite Missionary Society in 1874 and the Women's Home and Foreign Missionary Society in 1904 (Clark Hine & Thompson, 1998, pp. 184-185). American black Christian women desired to evangelize Africa, being dissatisfied with the discrimination, disenfranchisement, and low status afforded them in the United States and African women in Africa (Tah Tata, 2002). Isaiah 1:17, which says, "Seek justice, rescue the oppressed, defend the orphan, and plead for the widow" inspired some American black women to go to Africa. These women played significant roles in the evangelization and uplifting of African women and children. The sentiment was that black women were better able to relate to the Africans' plight, having experienced similar conditions (Martin S. D., 1981; Tah Tata, 2002).

Eighty black American Christian women went to Africa as missionaries between 1821 and 1934, serving in Congo, Liberia Sierra Leone, Angola, Mozambique, Cameroon, Malawi, Ghana, and South Africa. American black female Presbyterian missionaries established the Carrie V. Dyer Hospital in Monrovia, Liberia, the first missionary hospital in Liberia and the first in Africa established by American black women. It was established at a critical time in Monrovia, as the lack of good hygiene and sanitation, in addition to witch doctor practices, were factors in premature deaths (Fitts, 1985). Althea Brown Edmiston, Presbyterian missionary, served as a nurse when the need arose. Her service in the Congo, from 1902 to 1937, was the longest period served by any American black woman missionary of the Presbyterian Church. One of her greatest accomplishments was the writing of a Grammar and Dictionary in the Bakuba language (Presbyterian Church archives). Thomas and Henrietta Branch, Seventh-Day Adventist (SDA) missionaries, established the Malamuto Mission in Nyasaland, the largest SDA mission station in the world. There was a leprosarium, an elementary school, a high school, and a college on the mission station (Reynolds, 1984, pp. 330-331).

Purpose and Significance of the Research

Considering the mores of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, it is not surprising that there is little mention in the literature of black women with disabilities and the role of spirituality in their lives (Boswell, Knight, Hamer, & McChesney, 2001). “Much of the history of black women was lost forever because it was considered by almost everyone to be unimportant, but a great deal…is being brought to light” (Clark Hine & Thompson, 1998, p.4). Rarely were black missionary wives mentioned by name in correspondence or in recounting missionary work in Africa. Women were generally spoken of in terms of

their husbands when talking about African missions (Clendenen, 1964; Fitts, 1985; Isichei, 1995; Martin, S.D., 1989; Martin, S.D., 1981), and although an important part of the work, women received little recognition (Beaver, 1968; Pierce, 1968). Husbands received both his and his wife's salary, and first names of wives were rarely mentioned in correspondence (Martin, S.D., 1989; Martin, S.D., 1981).

There is little evidence of research studies that concentrate on the intersections of blackness (race), gender, disability, and Christianity and less evidence of studies investigating if female Christian missionaries were intentional in educating the disabled in Africa. This research is particularly relevant today in light of events taking place in the United States regarding race, gender, and the perceived place of those with black and brown bodies. It is critical to engage in discourses of intersectionality of blackness and disability, and failure to do so may have "disastrous and deadly consequences for disabled people of color caught at the violent interstices of multiple differences" (Erevelles, 2011, p. 97; Erevelles & Minear, 2010, p. 128). These individuals are perceived as non-citizens and (no) bodies by those educational, legal, and rehabilitational institutions designed to empower, protect, and nurture them (Erevelles, 2011; Erevelles & Minear, 2010). These assaults on black disabled individuals are "spirit murder", and in schools in the United States, there are millions of nonwhite disabled students for whom "spirit murder is the most significant experience in their educational lives" (p. 119; p. 143).

Research Questions

1. What were the narratives of Christian missions about the intersections of blackness, gender, disability, and Christianity?

2. How were African-American missionary women shaped by the narratives of blackness, gender, disability, and Christianity?
3. How did these women perpetuate and resist the idea of these narratives in Nyasaland, Congo, and Liberia?
4. What is the significance of understanding these narratives?

Conclusion

History is used to delve into the past for evidence of unacknowledged things seen and for inspiration (Giddings, 1984, p. 5). It is important that this part of history be explored and shared with African-Americans, because as James Baldwin (1965, *Unnamable Objects, Unspeakable Crimes*) proclaimed, "History…is not merely something to be read…we carry it within us, are unconsciously controlled by it in many ways, and is literally present in all that we do…it is to history that we owe our frames of reference, our identities, and our aspirations". The study of the intersectionality of blackness and disability is necessary today to address the shifting notions of blackness and identity. A consideration must be how much does disability trump race? (Bell, 2011); we must use the "Bell imperative" and "think more clearly, more politically about disability" (p. xi). The "triple jeopardy of race, gender, and disability" (Erevelles, 2011, p. 3) continues to cast a shadow over African-American females. The question "Why do some bodies matter more than others?" (p. 6) is one that must be answered.

CHAPTER TWO
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The true worth of a race must be measured by the character of its womanhood…
- Mary McLeod Bethune

The "triple jeopardy of blackness, gender, and disability" (Erevelles, 2011, p.3), coupled with the intersection of Christianity, continues to impact African-American women today. Then, as now, "disability is a key aspect of human experience" (Ferguson & Nusbaum, 2012, p. 71) and is "more than an individual impairment" (p. 72). As Ferguson & Nusbaum (2012) stated, "the study of disability…is at the foundation of our understanding of the social construction of race, gender …and other ways in which we differentiate ourselves from one another" (p.73).

This chapter discusses the research method used for determining how the narratives of Christian missions and the intersections of blackness, gender, disability, and Christianity shaped African American Christian women as they served as missionaries in Eastern and Southern Africa and the significance of understanding those narratives in today's America. Categories include research design, data collection, and data analysis.

Restatement of Research Questions

The present study addressed the following questions:

1. What were the narratives of white and black Christian mission agencies related to the intersections of blackness, gender, disability, and Christianity?
2. How were African American Christian women shaped by these narratives?
3. How did these women perpetuate and resist the idea of these narratives in Nyasaland, Congo, and Liberia?
4. What is the significance of understanding these narratives?

Research Design

The term qualitative research was not used in social sciences until the late 1960s. It has become an established and respected approach; and while there is not a common definition, most researchers agree on some features – describe and understand from the inside by analysing documents, communications and interactions, and experiences of groups or individuals; use of already existing data or new, generated data; and looking at two sources of data – primary and secondary (Rapley, 2007). Common characteristics include "(a) Descriptive – written results contain quotations from the data to substantiate and illustrate the presentation, (b) Nothing is trivial, (c) Must try to not bring personal attitudes in, (d) Primary goal is to add to the knowledge, and (e) Secondary goal is to better understand human behavior and experience" (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007, pp. 5-43).

To address my research questions, a grounded theory approach was used. Grounded theory (an emic framework) was developed by Anselm L. Strauss and Barney G. Glaser in 1967 (Creswell, 2013; Saldana, 2011) and moves beyond description to generate a theory, grounded in the lived experiences of the individuals (Creswell, 2013). Several major characteristics define grounded theory (Creswell, 2013; Saldana, 2011): (1) there is some action that the researcher is attempting to explain; (2) a theory of the action is developed, with categories arrayed to show how the theory works; (3) memoing becomes part of developing the theory; (4) the researcher is constantly comparing data with ideas about the emerging theory; and (5) data analysis is structured and coded to form a theoretical model. The intersection of the categories becomes the theory (p. 85; pp. 115-116).

In grounded theory, the researcher begins with open coding for major categories of information and then additional coding focusing on the intersections of the categories (Creswell, 2013, p. 86). The theory emerges with the process of memoing, where the researcher writes down ideas throughout the process of coding (Creswell, 2013, p. 89; Saldana, 2011, pp. 95-108).

Data Collection

Autobiographical memoirs, special collections records, archival information, and church and mission agencies history narratives were collected and reviewed. I researched "African American Christian female missionaries in Africa" and collected books, articles, and unpublished and published dissertations. References and bibliographies were then reviewed. I made two trips to the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. and photocopied books and articles that I had found in the references and bibliographies. I visited the National Baptist Convention headquarters in Philadelphia, PA and the Yale Divinity School library in New Haven, CT, gathering information on African American female missionaries. I made several trips to the UC Davis library in Davis, CA and photocopied a number of articles on African American female Christian missionaries; and I visited the Museum of African American Culture and History in Washington, D.C. I wrote letters to different mission agencies and received information from their archives. Recent and current writings from disability scholars of color, as well as from other female scholars, were used to understand the significance of the intersections of blackness, gender, disability, and Christianity during and after slavery and how these intersections continue to affect African American women today.

Data Analysis

The analysis of data from both primary and secondary sources and archival data was made in an attempt to answer the four research questions. After reading and rereading the wealth of information that I had collected, I began to analyse the data through memoing, first cataloguing primary sources as shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Primary Sources

Catalogue Memo
Primary Sources

Source	Source Location	Missionary	Date
Research Note	Archives of the Episcopal Church	Elizabeth Mars Johnson Thomson	
Treasures of the Day Missions Library	Yale Divinity Library	Amanda Smith (Methodist Episcopal) Maria Fearing (Presbyterian)	
Book – The Life, Travels, Labors, and Helpers of Mrs. Amanda Smith, the Famous Negro Missionary Evangelist	Yale Divinity Library	Amanda Smith (Methodist Episcopal)	1888
Lecture – David Christy. African Colonization by the Free Colored People of the United States an Indispensable Auxiliary to African Missions	Cornell University Library Digital Collections		1854
Document – Southern Horrors. Lynch Laws in All Its Phases by Ida B. Wells			1892
Speech of Theodore Tilton re: American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions	Library of Congress		1860
Book – Four Years in Liberia. A Sketch of the Life of the Rev. Samuel Williams, with remarks on the Missions, Manners and customs of the natives of Western Africa	Yale Divinity Library Archives		1857

Source	Source Location	Missionary	Date
The Role of Christian Missions in Education and Development in Dependent Territories	Journal of Negro Education		1946
Second Annual Report of the Freedmen's Missions Aid Society, Organized for the Evangelization of the African Race	Yale Divinity Library		1874
Article – Strivings of the Negro People by W.E.B. DuBois	Cornell University Library		
Addresses and Proceedings of the Congress on Africa	Library of Congress		1895
First Annual Report of the American Society for Colonizing the Free People of Color of the United States	Library of Congress		1818
Article – The Attitude of the Free Negro Toward African Colonization	Journal of Negro History		1916
The United Negro: His Problems and His Progress. Addresses and Proceedings The Negro Young People's Christian and Educational Congress	Library of Congress	L. Coppin	1902
Book – Destiny and Race. Selected Writings, 1840-1898 by Alexander Crummell	Library of Congress		Reprint 1992
Outline for Mission Study Classes. South Africa by J.E. East, Missionary to South Africa		Mrs. L. E. East (Baptist Church)	
Newsletter – The Crisis. Missionaries by W.E.B. DuBois	Library of Congress		1929
Book – A Century of Missions of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 1840-1940 by L.L. Berry, Secretary-Treasurer of the Missionary Department	Library of Congress		1942

Source	Source Location	Missionary	Date
Book – The Future of Africa being Addresses, Sermons, Etc., Etc., Delivered in the Republic of Liberia by Alex Crummell	Library of Congress		1862
Education in Missionary Work	The New York Times		1900
Article – The Negro in Conference at Tuskegee Institute	The African Times and Orient Review		1912
Missions are Criticized	The New York Times		1857; Reprint 1952
Are Christian Missions a Failure?	Vermont Watchman and State Journal		1869
Letter from Joseph Booth	Archives of the Seventh-Day Adventist	Branch family	10 Oct. 1902
Letter from Joseph Booth	Archives of the Seventh-Day Adventist	Branch family	05 Oct. 1902
Letter from Joseph Booth	Archives of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church	Branch family	14 Feb. 1905
Letter from Max Yergan	Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture	Yergan family (Y.M.C.A.)	1936
Letter from Gov. of Kenya re Negro missionaries	Government House, Nairobi, Kenya		1923
	The Mission Herald		Oct. 1926
Letter from Elizabeth Coles Bouey	The Mission Herald	Elizabeth Coles Bouey (Baptist)	Dec. 1926
Letter from Elizabeth Coles Bouey	The Mission Herald	Elizabeth Coles Bouey (Baptist)	Jan. 1927
Letter from Henrietta Branch	Advent Review and Sabbath Herald	Mrs. H.T. Branch	Aug. 1905
Letter from Thomas Branch	Advent Review and Sabbath Herald	Branch family	Aug. 1906

Source	Source Location	Missionary	Date
Letter from Thomas Branch	Advent Review and Sabbath Herald	Branch family	Jan. 1907
Letter from Thomas Branch	Advent Review and Sabbath Herald	Branch family	July 1907
Letter from Thomas Branch	Advent Review and Sabbath Herald	Branch family	18 Oct. 1906
Letter from Thomas Branch	Advent Review and Sabbath Herald	Branch family	11 Oct. 1906
Letter from Thomas Branch	Advent Review and Sabbath Herald	Branch family	06 Sept. 1906
Letter from Thomas Branch	Advent Review and Sabbath Herald	Branch family	27 April 1905
Letter from Mabel Branch	Advent Review and Sabbath Herald	Branch family	06 April 1905
Letter from Thomas Branch	Advent Review and Sabbath Herald	Branch family	23 Feb. 1905
Letter from Henrietta Branch	Advent Review and Sabbath Herald	Henrietta Branch	23 June 1904
Letter from Thomas Branch	Advent Review and Sabbath Herald	Branch family	19 May 1904
Letter from Thomas Branch	Advent Review and Sabbath Herald	Branch family	03 March 1904
Letter from Thomas Branch	Advent Review and Sabbath Herald	Branch family	11 Feb. 1904
Obituary of Henrietta Branch	Advent Review and Sabbath Herald	Henrietta Branch	22 May 1913
Obituary of Thomas Branch	Advent Review and Sabbath Herald	Thomas Branch	04 Dec. 1924

Source	Source Location	Missionary	Date
The Passing Tradition and the African Civilization	Journal of Negro History		1916
The Formation of the American Colonization Society	Journal of Negro History		1917
Photographs and Prints	Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division		1880-1900
Letter from Emma Delaney	The Mission Herald	Emma Delaney	Oct. 1914
Ethiopia: Her Gloom and Glory, as illustrated in the history of the Slave Trade and Slavery, the Rise of the Republic of Liberia, and the Progress of African Missions, by David Christy	Library of Congress		1857
A Lecture on African Civilization, including a brief outline of the Social and Moral Condition of Africa; and the Relations of American Slavery to African Civilization, delivered in the hall of the House of Representatives of the State of Ohio by David Christy	Long Beach State College Library		19 January 1850
News articles, correspondence, editorials (20)	Southern Baptist Missionary Journal	Baptist missionaries	1846 - 1850
News articles, correspondence, reports, journal entry, appeal, editorials (24)	Home and Foreign Journal	Baptist missionaries	1851 - 1856
Correspondence, editorials, journal entry, reports, editorials (36)	The Commission	Baptist missionaries	1849 - 1861
Book – The Epoch of Negro Baptists and the Foreign Mission Board by Edward A. Freeman		Baptist missionaries	Reprint 1980; Original 1953
Letters, correspondence, biographical sketches, autobiographical sketches	Presbyterian Historical Society, National Archive of the Presbyterian Church	Presbyterian missionaries – Maria Fearing, Althea Brown Edmiston, Lucy Gantt Sheppard	1800s

Source	Source Location	Missionary	Date
Book – Four Presbyterian Pioneers in Congo		Samuel Lapsley, William H. Sheppard, Maria Fearing, Lucy Gantt Sheppard	1893
Book – Presbyterian Pioneers in Congo by William Henry Sheppard. Autobiographical and historical lectures of Sheppard		Sheppard family	Reprint 2010; Original 1917
Book – An Autobiography: The Story of the Lord's Dealings with Mrs. Amanda Smith the Colored Evangelist		Amanda Smith (Methodist Episcopal)	Reprint 1988; Original 1893
Book – The Story of the National Baptists by Rev. Owen D. Pelt, Historiographer, and Ralph Lee Smith		Baptist missionaries	1960
Book – A Life for the Congo – the Story of Althea Brown Edmiston by Julia Lake Kellersberger		Althea Brown Edmiston	1947
Book – Day Dawn in Africa; or, Progress of the Protestant Episcopal Mission at Cape Palmas, West Africa	Nabu Public Domain Reprints. Reproduction of an original work published before 1923		
Book – Up the Ladder in Foreign Missions by L.G. Jordan, editor of the Afro-American Mission Herald			1903
Book – We Have Tomorrow: The Story of American Seventh-Day Adventists with an African Heritage by Louis B. Reynolds			1984
Book – A Voice from the South. A Black Woman of the South by Anna Julia Cooper			1892

I then used the catalogue memo to provide a synopsis of the sources and color-coded the sources into three categories – purple, blue, and yellow. Table 2 shows the results of that cataloguing.

Table 2 Color-Coded Primary Sources

Catalogue Memo
Primary Sources Color-Coded

Color Codes: Purple – sources to be analysed; Blue – sources about women but not to be analysed; Yellow – sources about Africa for background information

Source	Source Location	Missionary	Date	Synopsis
Research Note	Archives of the Episcopal Church	Elizabeth Mars Johnson Thomson (Episcopal)		
Treasures of the Day Missions Library	Yale Divinity Library	Amanda Smith (Methodist Episcopal) Maria Fearing (Presbyterian)		
Book – The Life, Travels, Labors, and Helpers of Mrs. Amanda Smith, the Famous Negro Missionary Evangelist	Yale Divinity Library	Amanda Smith (Methodist Episcopal)	1888	Writing on Amanda Smith and her service in Liberia
Book – An Autobiography: The Story of the Lord's Dealings with Mrs. Amanda Smith the Colored Evangelist	Book purchased	Amanda Smith (Methodist Episcopal)	Reprint 1988; Original 1893	Amanda Smith writes about her service in Liberia
Book – A Century of Missions of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 1840-1940 by L.L. Berry, Secretary-Treasurer of the Missionary Department	Library of Congress	Amanda Smith	1942	This is a history of missions of the AME Church. Amanda Smith is one of the missionaries mentioned in the book.

Source	Source Location	Missionary	Date	Synopsis
Addresses and Proceedings of the Congress on Africa	Library of Congress		1895	
Lecture – David Christy. African Colonization by the Free Colored People of the United States an Indispensable Auxiliary to African Missions	Cornell University Library Digital Collections		1854	
Document – Southern Horrors. Lynch Laws in All Its Phases by Ida B. Wells			1892	
Speech of Theodore Tilton re: American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions	Library of Congress		1860	
Book – Four Years in Liberia. A Sketch of the Life of the Rev. Samuel Williams, with remarks on the Missions, Manners and customs of the natives of Western Africa	Yale Divinity Library Archives		1857	
The Role of Christian Missions in Education and Development in Dependent Territories	Journal of Negro Education		1946	
Second Annual Report of the Freedmen's Missions Aid Society, Organized for the Evangelization of the African Race	Yale Divinity Library		1874	
First Annual Report of the American Society for Colonizing the Free People of Color of the United States	Library of Congress		1818	

Source	Source Location	Missionary	Date	Synopsis
Article – Strivings of the Negro People by W.E.B. DuBois	Cornell University Library			
Article – The Attitude of the Free Negro Toward African Colonization	Journal of Negro History		1916	
Book – Destiny and Race. Selected Writings, 1840-1898 by Alexander Crummell	Library of Congress		Reprint 1992	
The United Negro: His Problems and His Progress. Addresses and Proceedings The Negro Young People's Christian and Educational Congress	Library of Congress	L. Coppin	1902	
Outline for Mission Study Classes. South Africa by J.E. East, Missionary to South Africa		Mrs. L. E. East (Baptist Church)		
Newsletter – The Crisis. Missionaries by W.E.B. DuBois	Library of Congress		1929	
Book – The Future of Africa being Addresses, Sermons, Etc., Etc., Delivered in the Republic of Liberia by Alex Crummell	Library of Congress		1862	
Education in Missionary Work	The New York Times		1900	
Article – The Negro in Conference at Tuskegee Institute	The African Times and Orient Review		1912	
Missions are Criticized	The New York Times		1857; Reprint 1952	
Are Christian Missions a Failure?	Vermont Watchman and State Journal		1869	

Source	Source Location	Missionary	Date	Synopsis
	The Mission Herald		Oct. 1926	
Letter from Max Yergan	Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture	Yergan family (Y.M.C.A.)	1936	
Letter from Gov. of Kenya re Negro missionaries	Government House, Nairobi, Kenya		1923	
Letter from Elizabeth Coles Bouey	The Mission Herald	Elizabeth Coles Bouey (Baptist)	Dec. 1926	
Letter from Elizabeth Coles Bouey	The Mission Herald	Elizabeth Coles Bouey (Baptist)	Jan. 1927	
Letter from Joseph Booth	Archives of the Seventh-Day Adventist	Branch family	10 Oct. 1902	These are letters written about the work in Nyasaland (Malawi) and in South Africa
Letter from Joseph Booth	Archives of the Seventh-Day Adventist	Branch family	05 Oct. 1902	
Letter from Joseph Booth	Archives of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church	Branch family	14 Feb. 1905	
Letter from Henrietta Branch	Advent Review and Sabbath Herald	Mrs. H.T. Branch	Aug. 1905	
Letter from Thomas Branch	Advent Review and Sabbath Herald	Branch family	Aug. 1906	
Letter from Thomas Branch	Advent Review and Sabbath Herald	Branch family	Jan. 1907	
Letter from Thomas Branch	Advent Review and Sabbath Herald	Branch family	July 1907	

Source	Source Location	Missionary	Date	Synopsis
Letter from Thomas Branch	Advent Review and Sabbath Herald	Branch family	18 Oct. 1906	
Letter from Thomas Branch	Advent Review and Sabbath Herald	Branch family	11 Oct. 1906	
Letter from Thomas Branch	Advent Review and Sabbath Herald	Branch family	06 Sept. 1906	
Letter from Thomas Branch	Advent Review and Sabbath Herald	Branch family	27 April 1905	
Letter from Mabel Branch	Advent Review and Sabbath Herald	Branch family	06 April 1905	These are letters written about the work in Nyasaland (Malawi) and in South Africa
Letter from Thomas Branch	Advent Review and Sabbath Herald	Branch family	23 Feb. 1905	
Letter from Henrietta Branch	Advent Review and Sabbath Herald	Henrietta Branch	23 June 1904	
Letter from Thomas Branch	Advent Review and Sabbath Herald	Branch family	19 May 1904	
Letter from Thomas Branch	Advent Review and Sabbath Herald	Branch family	03 March 1904	
Letter from Thomas Branch	Advent Review and Sabbath Herald	Branch family	11 Feb. 1904	
Obituary of Henrietta Branch	Advent Review and Sabbath Herald	Henrietta Branch	22 May 1913	
Obituary of Thomas Branch	Advent Review and Sabbath Herald	Thomas Branch	04 Dec. 1924	

Source	Source Location	Missionary	Date	Synopsis
The Formation of the American Colonization Society	Journal of Negro History		1917	
The Passing Tradition and the African Civilization	Journal of Negro History		1916	
Photographs and Prints	Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division		1880-1900	
Letter from Emma Delaney	The Mission Herald	Emma Delaney	Oct. 1914	
Book – A Life for the Congo – the Story of Althea Brown Edmiston by Julia Lake Kellersberger		Althea Brown Edmiston	1947	
Ethiopia: Her Gloom and Glory, as illustrated in the history of the Slave Trade and Slavery, the Rise of the Republic of Liberia, and the Progress of African Missions, by David Christy	Library of Congress		1857	Christy writes about missionaries in Liberia.
A Lecture on African Civilization, including a brief outline of the Social and Moral Condition of Africa; and the Relations of American Slavery to African Civilization, delivered in the hall of the House of Representatives of the State of Ohio by David Christy	Long Beach State College Library		19 January 1850	
Letters, correspondence, biographical sketches, autobiographical sketches	Presbyterian Historical Society, National Archive of the Presbyterian Church	Presbyterian missionaries – Maria Fearing, Althea Brown Edmiston, Lucy Gantt Sheppard	1800s	

Source	Source Location	Missionary	Date	Synopsis
Book – The Epoch of Negro Baptists and the Foreign Mission Board by Edward A. Freeman		Baptist missionaries	Reprint 1980; Original 1953	
Book – Presbyterian Pioneers in Congo by William Henry Sheppard. Autobiographical and historical lectures of Sheppard		Sheppard family	Reprint 2010; Original 1917	
Book – Four Presbyterian Pioneers in Congo		Samuel Lapsley, William H. Sheppard, Maria Fearing, Lucy Gantt Sheppard	1893	
News articles, correspondence, editorials (20)	Southern Baptist Missionary Journal	Baptist missionaries – Mrs. John Day	1846 - 1850	Letters about the work in Liberia.
News articles, correspondence, reports, journal entry, appeal, editorials (24)	Home and Foreign Journal	Baptist missionaries – Mrs. John Day	1851 - 1856	Letters about the work in Liberia
Correspondence, editorials, journal entry, reports, editorials (36)	The Commission	Baptist missionaries – Mrs. John Day	1849 - 1861	Letters about the work in Liberia
Book – The Story of the National Baptists by Rev. Owen D. Pelt, Historiographer, and Ralph Lee Smith		Baptist missionaries	1960	
Book – Day Dawn in Africa; or, Progress of the Protestant Episcopal Mission at Cape Palmas, West Africa	Nabu Public Domain Reprints. Reproduction of an original work published before 1923			
Book – Up the Ladder in Foreign Missions by L.G. Jordan, editor of the Afro-American Mission Herald			1903	
Book – We Have Tomorrow: The Story of American Seventh-Day Adventists with an African Heritage by Louis B. Reynolds			1984	Henrietta Branch

After putting the primary sources into the three categories, I began coding the sources. For the first cycle of coding, I used narrative coding, which yielded four tables - blackness, gender, disability, and Christianity.

Table 3 Coding Memo – Blackness

Coding Memo
Blackness

Blackness – perceptions of African American missionaries based on skin hue

Source	Quote
05 Oct. 1902	Branch family were objected to by the British officials without the slightest cause, but finally they prevailed over the prejudice aroused
05 Oct. 1902	Gladness of the native of different tribes to see that Brother and Sister Branch have a visible and acknowledged relationship to them.
05 Oct. 1902	Plainly they must increase while we [whites] must decrease in influence.
05 Oct. 1902	Daughter and mother seem to be a perfect and unending source of wonderment to the native women.
05 Oct. 1902	Mothers and girls will come and sit down in silent amazement to watch the movements of Miss Branch or her mother; it seems like a revelation of new possibilities to them
23 June 1904	When we came, [Africans] remembered the words of Livingstone, and you may be sure we were heartily received by them.
14 February 1905	I am delighted to learn that [Brother Branch and wife] are both to be left in the peaceful possession of the beautiful Plainfield estate, prepared for them as a "beacon light" both to the negro of the Dispersion and the unsophisticated native of the fatherland.
27 April 1905	These people of the dark regions are not in love with work. … [taught] that it is a duty, as well as a privilege, to engage in honest manual labor.
Autobiography, p. 117	One day a lady asked me if I did not think all colored people wanted to be white. I told her that I did not think so – I did not. I never wished I was white but once, that I could remember, and that was years ago.
Autobiography, p. 117	No, we who are the royal black are very well satisfied with His gift to use in this substantial color. I, for one, praise Him for what He has given me, although at times it is very inconvenient.

Source	Quote
Autobiography, p. 118	A lady asked, "I know you cannot be white, but if you could be, would you not rather be white than black?" "No, no," I said, "as the Lord lives, I would rather be black and fully saved than to be white and not saved".
Autobiography, p. 118	Now, to say that being black did not make it inconvenient for us often, would not be true; but belonging to royal stock, as we do, we propose braving this inconvenience for the present, and pass on into the great big future where all these little things will be lost because of their absolute smallness!
Autobiography, p. 332	White Wesleyan minister came on board the ship in Sierra Leone. "He said that the colored missionaries were not men that could be depended upon to advance and develop the work as one might suppose".
Autobiography, p. 332	At this I felt quite indignant, and thought it was because he was a white man, and simply said that about colored men. But after I had been there awhile, and got to understand things better, I quite agreed with what the missionary told me on my first arrival on those shores.

Table 4 Coding Memo – Gender

Coding Memo
Gender

Gender – African/African American females educating or being educated

Source	Quote
03 March 1904	Wife and daughter do well with the language. [husband speaks through an interpreter – still learning the language]
23 June 1904	…they have only been anxious to learn to read the books, and to get an education, that they might be able to earn a good salary
23 June 1904	..former teaching was to let the women do the hard work, even the clearing of the ground and the raising of the food for the family, while the men spent their time in a sort of happy-go-easy life. This change to industry we notice in those who attend the school.
23 June 1904	The mother, even, with her child tied on her back, came to work at shelling corn or hoeing in the field, to get a garment for herself and babe.
23 February 1905	The enrollment in the school has been sixty-six. The attendance…and interest is good.
23 February 1905	Two hours – beginning at 10am – attended by the village children and the field boys who are just beginning English.
23 February 1905	Advanced classes from 6am to noon, then starting at 1:30 for two hours – reading, writing, spelling, arithmetic, translating into good English. 24 boys and five women on the station.

Source	Quote
06 April 1905	Forty pupils enrolled – fifteen from the villages. Two sessions of school daily.
06 April 1905	Many of the village children attend the school, and also Sabbath services.
27 April 1905	Father, mother, and children all attending school
16 August 1906	We have a boarding school for the boys
16 August 1906	Attendance and interest in the school work are very good.
11 Oct 1906	We have three little girls who were slaves, but ran away from their masters, and sought protection at the mission. We are caring for them and teaching them to work, and they attend school.
18 Oct 1906	The school work is in good condition, with a daily attendance of seventy-five.
18 Oct 1906	We are having great difficulty in securing books and other school supplies, as the Scottish mission refuses to sell us anything, on account of the Sabbath question.
Autobiography foreword	Gender and race cannot be conflated, except in the instance of the black woman's voice, and it is this voice which must be uttered and to which we must listen.
Autobiography foreword	The myopic sight of the darkened eye can only be restored when the full range of the black woman's voice, with its own special timbres and shadings, remains mute no longer.
Autobiography foreword	And of that muffled chord, the one mute and voiceless note has been the sadly expectant Black Woman
Autobiography foreword	…neither should the dark man be wholly expected fully and adequately to reproduce the exact Voice of the Black Woman
Autobiography introduction	At no time...would [Bishop] Grant or any member of the ministerial hierarchy acknowledge Amanda as a preacher whose work and success served to challenge the [AME] Church's exclusion of women from the clergy.
Autobiography, p. 342	Education is our country's great need. There is so little attention paid to the education of girls; not a single high school for girls in the whole republic of Liberia.

Table 5 Coding Memo – Disability

Coding Memo
Disability

Disability – real or perceived handicap, visible or hidden

Source	Quote
10 Oct 1902	Branch family are a decided success up to their respective capacity
10 Oct 1902	Father and mother have a somewhat defective education, and are lacking in educated fitness
23 June 1904	The people as a rule are much afflicted with loathsome sores. Many are brought to the mission in their machilas, or on the backs of relatives, for treatment.
23 June 1904	I have learned to treat these sores successfully….the only medicine I have for treatment of these is plenty of soap-suds, iodoform, and boracic acid.
23 June 1904	I have had to turn away only a few cases that were lepers.
27 April 1905	We have not had any serious sickness or deaths during this past year at the mission.
03 August 1905	Friday – washing and dressing of the wounds of those who are afflicted, and attending to the needs of the sick.
03 August 1905	…the condition of the women – the wife, the mother, the daughter, and the sister – is pitiable and deplorable – yes, I can say from observation, most loathsome.
03 August 1905	Truly, indeed, as it is written, "As is the mother, so is her daughter".
16 August 1906	These people do not learn fast: but, considering that they are just beginning to see the light of day, and of better things, we think their progress remarkable.
03 Jan 1907	My wife's health has failed, but she keeps on, trying to keep up her part of the work.

Table 6 Coding Memo – Christianity

Coding Memo
Christianity

Christianity – Sabbath, teaching about salvation in Christ

Source	Quote
05 Oct. 1902	Fifty such carefully selected students are sufficient, constantly received, to provide for the eight tribes of B.C.A.
05 Oct. 1902	Advantage to have married students, as we can then train the wife in womanly duties at the same time
05 Oct. 1902	Plant them on outstations, fit to become a modest, cleanly, Christian object lesson to those to whom they are sent

Source	Quote
03 March 1904	More of our people…come to this part of Africa, to work among this people who are in heathen darkness, to help lift them up to stand as men for God.
03 March 1904	Many of the natives come to us, and ask to be taught here, because of the Sabbath.
03 March 1904	We are hoping to do much here in the strength of Christ.
19 May 1904	It is sad to see them coming and going day after day… living in the darkness of heathenism, with all its superstition, without a Saviour, and bound about with many peculiar beliefs and customs.
23 June 1904	…enlightening and uplifting this people, who are in darkness and superstition and ignorance
23 June 1904	…a marked reformation going on among them
23 June 1904	..now they are beginning to realize that something more is needed to help them on in life
23 June 1904	The Sabbath services are well attended. All give good attention.
06 April 1905	The older people do not like to change their customs, but many of the young ones do not like the village life, so come to the missions to be taught.
06 April 1905	The work is progressing nicely in all lines. We are…interested in our work for these people who are sitting in darkness and superstition.
03 August 1905	The native is not very quickly converted to the Word of God.
06 Sept. 1906	…scattering and penetrating the darkness of superstition and sin
11 Oct. 1906	Women are beginning to read the Bible, and are interested as they have not been before.
18 Oct 1906	The adversary of souls is angry at the oft-repeated visits of the boys into his camp with the Word of God
03 Jan 1907	… having some peculiar experiences with the missionaries of a certain denomination.
03 Jan 1907	All the different missionaries in British Central Africa held a joint meeting, and agreed that if this Seventh-day Adventist mission did not come in and join with them, and work as they worked, we should not be allowed to use the government land for school purposes.
Autobiography, p. 22	I often say to people that I have a right to shout more than some folks; I have been bought twice, and set free twice, and so I feel I have a good right to shout. Hallelujah!
Autobiography, p. 335	You can be sure that any religion that teaches the inferiority of the negro never came from heaven. [Hon. RHW Johnson]
p. 352	The darkness of mind here among the people is very great. God, send help, for Jesus' sake. Through ignorance there is much opposition to the temperance work.
p. 354	I have not seen so much ignorance as there seems to be among many of the people of this county. How I wish the Lord would send some good missionary to be a blessing to the people.

Source	Quote
p. 359	The Lord poured out His Spirit, and there was a great awakening among the people.
p. 453	My people often called me "white folks' nigger," anyhow. So I am in for it, and I don't care. All I care to do is to keep in favor with God and man as much as lieth in me

Looking at the coded data, several were more complex than one code; and I began to see relationships between the original codes. I then did a second level of coding, axial coding, strategically reassembling the data with the goal of linking categories to show how they are related (Saldana, 2016, pp. 244-245). The results are shown in Tables 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, and 13.

Table 7 Blackness and Disability

Coding Memo
Blackness and Disability

Blackness seen as disability

05 Oct. 1902	Branch family were objected to by the British officials without the slightest cause, but finally they prevailed over the prejudice aroused
10 Oct 1902	Branch family are a decided success up to their respective capacity
10 Oct 1902	Father and mother have a somewhat defective education, and are lacking in educated fitness
16 August 1906	These people do not learn fast: but, considering that they are just beginning to see the light of day, and of better things, we think their progress remarkable.

Table 8 Blackness, Disability, and Christianity

Coding Memo
Blackness, Disability, and Christianity

Blackness seen as disability; whole gospel not preached

03 January 1907	My wife's health has failed, but she keeps on, trying to keep up her part of the work.
Reynolds, p. 332	Booth "found it difficult to follow the leadership of Branch". He believed that he was better suited to leadership than Branch.

Table 9 Blackness and Gender

Coding Memo
Blackness and Gender

Black women seen as less than men

05 Oct 1902	Daughter and mother seem to be a perfect and unending source of wonderment to the native women.
05 Oct 1902	Mothers and girls will come and sit down in silent amazement to watch the movements of Miss Branch or her mother; it seems like a revelation of new possibilities to them
Autobiography foreword	And of that muffled chord, the one mute and voiceless note has been the sadly expectant Black Woman
Autobiography foreword	…neither should the dark man be wholly expected fully and adequately to reproduce the exact Voice of the Black Woman
Autobiography foreword	Gender and race cannot be conflated, except in the instance of the black woman's voice, and it is this voice which must be uttered and to which we must listen.
Autobiography foreword	These people of the dark regions are not in love with work. …[taught] that it is a duty, as well as a privilege, to engage in honest manual labor.
23 June 1904	..former teaching was to let the women do the hard work, even the clearing of the ground and the raising of the food for the family, while the men spent their time in a sort of happy-go-easy life. This change to industry we notice in those who attend the school.
23 June 1904	The mother, even, with her child tied on her back, came to work at shelling corn or hoeing in the field, to get a garment for herself and babe.
11 Oct 1906	We have three little girls who were slaves, but ran away from their masters, and sought protection at the mission. We are caring for them and teaching them to work, and they attend school.
18 Oct 1906	The myopic sight of the darkened eye can only be restored when the full range of the black woman's voice, with its own special timbres and shadings, remains mute no longer.
Autobiography introduction	At no time...would [Bishop] Grant or any member of the ministerial hierarchy acknowledge Amanda as a preacher whose work and success served to challenge the [AME] Church's exclusion of women from the clergy.
Autobiography, p.342	Education is our country's great need. There is so little attention paid to the education of girls; not a single high school for girls in the whole republic of Liberia.

Table 10 Blackness, Gender, and Disability

Coding Memo
Blackness, Gender, and Disability

Blackness in women seen as disability

03 August 1905	…the condition of the women – the wife, the mother, the daughter, and the sister – is pitiable and deplorable – yes, I can say from observation, most loathsome.
03 August 1905	Truly, indeed, as it is written, "As is the mother, so is her daughter".

Table 11 Blackness, Gender, and Christianity

Coding Memo
Blackness, Gender, and Christianity

Whole gospel not preached about women and men

03 Jan 1907	All the different missionaries in British Central Africa held a joint meeting, and agreed that if this Seventh-day Adventist mission did not come in and join with them, and work as they worked, we should not be allowed to use the government land for school purposes.
Autobiography Introduction	At no time…would [Bishop] Grant or any member of the ministerial hierarchy acknowledge Amanda as a preacher whose work and success served to challenge the [AME] Church's exclusion of women from the clergy.
03 March 1904	More of our people…come to this part of Africa, to work among this people who are in heathen darkness, to help lift them up to stand as men for God.
Autobiography, p. 22	I often say to people that I have a right to shout more than some folks; I have been bought twice, and set free twice, and so I feel I have a good right to shout. Hallelujah!
Autobiography, p. 118	A lady asked, "I know you cannot be white, but if you could be, would you not rather be white than black?" "No, no," I said, "as the Lord lives, I would rather be black and fully saved than to be white and not saved".
Autobiography, p. 453	My people often called me "white folks' nigger, " anyhow. So I am in for it, and I don't care. All I care to do is to keep in favor with God and man as much as lieth in me.
Jordan, 1903, p. 257	The condition in which a man is born does not place him beyond the reach of divine love.

Table 12 Blackness and Christianity

Coding Memo
Blackness and Christianity

Blackness seen as an advantage in sharing the gospel

14 February 1905	I am delighted to learn that [Brother Branch and wife] are both to be left in the peaceful possession of the beautiful Plainfield estate, prepared for them as a "beacon light" both to the negro of the Dispersion and the unsophisticated native of the fatherland.
03 January 1907	…having some peculiar experiences with the missionaries of a certain denomination.
Jordan, p. xii	Missionaries are sent out, not to emphasize philosophy, dogma, or creed; but a personal Christ, "HE himself the truth"
Jordan, p. 159	The imperative need of Africa is the Bible, and the imperative duty of her descendants in this civilized land is to send it.
Jordan, p. 176	The rise and progress of the gospel in Africa is one of the crowning monuments of Negro enterprise.
Jordan, p.87	Much depends upon the Negro Baptists as to the Christianizing and civilizing of the Negroes of Africa.

Table 13 Gender and Christianity

Coding Memo
Gender and Christianity

Women evangelizing women

05 Oct 1902	Advantage to have married students, as we can then train the wife in womanly duties at the same time
05 Oct 1902	Plant them on outstations, fit to become a modest, cleanly, Christian object lesson to those to whom they are sent
03 March 1904	More of our people…come to this part of Africa, to work among this people who are in heathen darkness, to help lift them up to stand as men for God.
19 May 1904	It is sad to see them coming and going day after day… living in the darkness of heathenism, with all its superstition, without a Saviour, and bound about with many peculiar beliefs and customs.
23 June 1904	…enlightening and uplifting this people, who are in darkness and superstition and ignorance
23 June 1904	…a marked reformation going on among them
23 June 1904	..now they are beginning to realize that something more is needed to help them on in life

06 April 1905	The older people do not like to change their customs, but many of the young ones do not like the village life, so come to the missions to be taught.
06 April 1905	The work is progressing nicely in all lines. We are…interested in our work for these people who are sitting in darkness and superstition.
11 Oct. 1906	Women are beginning to read the Bible, and are interested as they have not been before.
Autobiography, p. 118	A lady asked, "I know you cannot be white, but if you could be, would you not rather be white than black?" "No, no," I said, "as the Lord lives, I would rather be black and fully saved than to be white and not saved".

Summary

In this chapter, the methodology used for determining how the narratives of Christian missions and the intersections of blackness, gender, disability, and Christianity shaped African American Christian women as they served as missionaries in Eastern and Southern Africa in the late 1800s and early 1900s and the significance of understanding those narratives in today's America was examined. Chapter three will discuss the narratives of blackness, gender, and disability created by white Christian missionaries and mission agencies, as well as those created by black Christian missionaries and mission agencies.

CHAPTER THREE
MISSION AGENCY NARRATIVES AND THE INTERSECTIONS OF BLACKNESS, GENDER, DISABILITY, AND CHRISTIANITY

We specialize in the wholly impossible.
- Nannie Helen Burroughs

Introduction

Born a slave in 1838, Maria Fearing remained a slave for twenty-five years. During those years, she heard stories of children in other lands who did not know the saving grace of God. At six years old, Miss Fearing was put into the Oak Hill Plantation in Alabama as a house servant and was taught Bible stories, stressing the importance of foreign missions, which began her desire to go to Africa as a missionary (Alabama Women's Hall of Fame, 2000; Phipps, 2002; Sammon, 1989; Swann & Swann, 2007; Turner, J.G., 2008). When the Civil War ended, Miss Fearing was manumitted. She was twenty-seven. At thirty-three, she began elementary school in Talladega and remained in school until completing the ninth grade, whereupon Miss Fearing began teaching, purchasing a home in the nearby town of Anniston.

After hearing African-American Presbyterian missionary William Sheppard speak in 1894, the desire Miss Fearing harbored as a child to go to Africa as a missionary was heightened. She applied for service with the Presbyterian mission, but her application for service was denied because she was considered too old. Not accepting the denial, Miss Fearing approached Judge Lapsley, the father of Samuel Lapsley, a white Presbyterian missionary in the Congo serving with William and Lucy Sheppard, and entreated him to purchase her home, which would give her the funds for paying her own way to Africa. Judge Lapsley purchased her home and also interceded on Miss Fearing's behalf with the Mission Committee. Her application was approved, and she became the first self-

supporting missionary of the Presbyterian Church (Document on Black Presbyterian Missionaries 1889-1989; Phipps, 2002). When Miss Fearing touched the shores of Africa, her heart "leaped within her" (Brown Edmiston, 1938), for she had realized her dream – to go to Africa as a missionary. She was fifty-six years old.

Over the course of their lives, Maria Fearing and Amanda Berry Smith were shaped by the varied narratives of blackness, gender, and disability created by white Christian missionaries and mission agencies, as well as those created by black Christian missionaries and mission agencies that I seek to disentangle in this chapter. Sub-headings include the impact of slavery on black American women and the narratives of white and black mission agencies and missionaries.

Slavery's Impact on Black American Women

The Atlantic slave trade brought a 'crass leveling' to all Africans, and both men and women were "refashioned into subjects of exploitation, brutality, rape, psychological deconstruction and terror – whereupon an unspeakable new regime of dehumanization emerged" (James, 1963; Oshoosi, 1996, p.296). On the Atlantic crossing, Africans were "stripped, dehumanized, and branded…packed into small spaces and fed contaminated food and water" (Falola, 2002, p.116). As Africans from divergent cultures were brought to America, sold on the auction block like cattle and then scattered, many of their religious, cultural, and linguistic similarities were lost, "a deliberate attempt by part of the dominant society to dislocate a people's unity by weakening their system of beliefs" (Turner, 2001, p. 83).

The breakdown of the African slaves' traditional religion began the real process of slavery, and the teaching of Christianity was a means of perpetuating the superiority of

the masters' beliefs while convincing the slaves of the inferiority of their traditional beliefs (Turner, 2001, p. 83). Europeans thus achieved the dilution of African traditional religions and appeased masters' consciences for the enslavement of blacks. As Wood notes, "It was Christianity, a cornerstone of those 'large' and 'cruel' slave systems that perverted the African's quality of life" (Wood, 1990, p. 38; as quoted in Mazama, 2002).

Not all blacks who first came to North America came as slaves. Some came as indentured servants. Like poor whites, they were able to purchase their freedom after serving their masters for a number of years. By the eighteenth century, however, most entered and remained as slaves, all for the economic prosperity of the South (Christy, 1857; Fogel & Engerman, 1974; Simms, 1998; Smallwood, 2007). To justify their actions, colonial Americans labeled Africans as savages, and slavery was used as a rescue from this savagery (Falola, 2002; Isaacs, 1959).

Over time, enslavement crushed identity with Africa, and whites dehumanized slaves with the continued mantra that the black was "an inferior being without history or place in the stream of human culture, that he was subject – past, present, and forever – to the total superiority of white men, the masters of the earth" (Isaacs, 1963, p. 57). William Hannibal Thomas claimed that blacks could "overcome their supposed racial disabilities" with a "regimen of white supervision reinforced by physical compulsion", recommending that Blacks be "whipped as punishment for minor crimes" (Kennedy, R., 2008, p. 41). Blacks were viewed as inherently inferior - mentally, intellectually, and physically (Baynton, 2004), words that have historically been used to describe those with disabilities (Connor, 2008). The word 'black' became an insult, a "key word of rejection", and whether the word 'African' was also uttered, "the Africans were the blacks, the source of

all the blackness, the depths from which all had come and from which all wanted to rise" (Isaacs, 1959, p.232). It was thought that the "worst thing anybody could say to you in addition to calling you 'black nigger' was 'black African'" (p.232).

Furthermore, slavery was justified by many slaveholders as God ordained and sanctioned in the Scriptures – it was the will of God. Slaves had a mandate from God to obey their masters, as recorded in the writings of Paul, and espoused by many white Christians, most notably Rev. Thornton Stringfellow, an influential Baptist preacher, who based his argument on Genesis 9, which he posited placed Africans under a servitude curse to Europeans, fulfilling the will of God (Simms, 1998). Although white Christians believed that it was wrong to enslave other Christians, Africans were not Christians, so slavery was justified, as enslavement would provide an opportunity for salvation (Work, 1916). Slaveholders, however, believed that the Christian gospel could be a "catalyst for slave revolts or insurrections", and they did not "want to take the chance that their valuable 'property' would be freed" by salvation (Lincoln, 1973, p. 302; Wheeler, 1973). Others believed that the African slave was "little more than an animal devoid of a soul, for whom therefore Christianity was irrelevant" (Lincoln, 1973, p. 302; Wheeler, 1973). A distinction was made between making "a Christian a slave" and "a slave a Christian" (Kendi, 2016, p. 44).

Slavery was not only justified as God-ordained, it was also argued that the brains of Africans were smaller than the brains of whites, and that without the civilizing that comes from being subordinate to whites, Africans would slip back into barbarism (Simms, 1998). The facial angle of the Negro was also used as a justification for whites' contention of the inherent inferiority of blacks (Fredrickson, G., 1971, p. 49). Thomas

Jefferson, the 3rd President of the United States, disliked slavery, viewed it as evil, and believed America would be punished by God for it; but he also believed that Africans were inferior to whites temperamentally, intellectually, and physically (Campbell, 2006; Simms, 1998, p. 49). Jefferson (1785) declared, "I advance it therefore as a suspicion only, that the blacks, whether originally a distinct race, or made distinct by time and circumstances, are inferior to the whites in the endowments both of body and mind". Jefferson went further and stated that "this unfortunate difference of colour, and perhaps of faculty, is a powerful obstacle to the emancipation of these people". Other political elites agreed with Jefferson. At a Senate meeting in April 1860, for example, there was discussion about providing education to the free blacks living in Washington, D.C. Senator Jefferson Davis from Mississippi, in his objection, stated (Congressional Globe, 1860):

> This Government was not founded by negroes or for negroes, but by white men for white men…the inequality of the white and black races – stamped from the beginning, marked in decree and prophecy – the will of God which the puny efforts of man have in vain attempted to subvert...when the low and vulgar son of Noah…sunk by debasing himself and his lineage by a connection with an inferior race of men, he doomed his descendants to perpetual slavery…it is the natural inferiority of the race (p. 1682).

That sentiment was used by white Christian mission agencies to justify slavery; and then, after manumission, to justify the treatment of black missionaries to Africa.

The Narratives of White Missionaries and Mission Agencies

In this section, the views of white Christian mission agencies and their white missionaries are examined relating to the intersections of blackness, gender, and disability. There were three primary reasons that white Americans traveled to Africa – to Christianize, to colonize, and to commercialize. Other reasons for travel were to 'civilize" Africans, with others being interested in the animal and plant life of Africa. Some wanted the psychological benefits of being in Africa, "leaving behind the frustrations of civilized life and to test one's courage" (McCarthy, 1983, p. 25). Some, according to Campbell (2006), "were indeed paragons of selfless service and others were self-satisfied fools. Some were avid supporters of European conquest while others had a distinctly ambivalent relationship with colonial authority. A few became champions of African rights" (p. 141).

Anglo Christian missionaries who came to Africa in the 19th century viewed African traditional religions as lacking and sought to expunge them from African society. This worldview was shaped in part by stories from travelers who had visited Africa for a short period of time, returning to America and Europe to write imaginative stories about Africa (Brown, 2000; Idowu, 1973; Mazama, 2002). The missionaries were proclaiming the equality of all, that "God is no respecter of persons" (Acts 10:34), but the proclamation did not match the reality, which was that Africans were relegated to the class of the oppressed, despite having embraced western culture (Muga, 1975).

The missionaries viewed Africans as pagans and sought to destroy all vestiges of their culture, replacing it with Western values and culture – the superior culture. Aristotle's statement that some are marked out for subjection and others for rule was the

attitude of the missionaries (Muga, 1975). Nida (1954) expounded further, stating that "white supremacy and superiority have been…defended as Biblical. It has been hard for some to see why their own culture should not be carted bag and baggage to every part of the world and there imitated by devoted adherents of *the* way of life" (pp. 255-257). Jordan (1903) noted that Europe stole the African from Africa in the 18th century and is now stealing Africa from the African in the 19th century (p. 170); and as Chioma Steady (1996) notes, "Colonial penetration in Africa in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries produced the most profound changes in the lives of the African woman on the continent and disrupted the traditional system of production" (p. 9).

Ultimately, the missionaries had no desire for the Africans to become educated. They simply wanted the Africans to be able to read the Bible, speak a European language, and preach the gospel to other Africans (Falola, 2002). Missionary education instructed Africans to believe "that true dignity lies in being like the European in every way: this includes an attitude of contempt towards his own native custom and religion" (Idowu, 1973, p. 99).

Blackness, Gender, and Disability

In the 1800s, white mission boards believed that American blacks were better able to acclimatize to life in tropical areas of western and central Africa and more resistant to African disease than whites (Campbell, 2006; Weisbord, 1969). In addition, it was felt that there was a "psychological or spiritual bond with Africans" (Campbell, 2006, p. 142). While proclaiming that American blacks were the best for evangelizing Africa, the thought of "social equality between white and black missionaries; the paying of Negro missionaries on the same scale as white missionaries, and their promotion and treatment

as civilized beings" was abhorrent to white missionary societies, and "with few exceptions, American white Christianity could not stand this, and they consequently changed their policy. Several of them stopped sending Negroes altogether" (DuBois, 1931, p. 1556; DuBois, 1929, p. 168).

Age was a factor considered in appointment to African fields by white mission boards. Women over forty were rejected, demonstrating white mission boards' unfamiliarity with the importance of elders in both African and American black cultures (Tah Tata, 2002). Maria Fearing, a black Presbyterian missionary, at fifty-six secured her own passage to the Congo; and after two years was approved for a salary by the Foreign Mission Board but only at half the salary of other single missionaries. Two years later, the United States Presbyterian Mission Committee, seeing the value in Miss Fearing's service, compensated her for the next twenty years with a regular salary (Brown Edmiston, 1938; Edgerton, 2002; Phipps, 2002).

American black missionaries were sent by white mission agencies primarily to African areas where white missionaries were perishing at high rates: the Congo, Liberia, and Sierra Leone (Williams W. L., 1982). The Methodist Church began sending American black missionaries to Liberia as teachers because of the belief that the American black was better suited for the African climate and not because they believed the black was capable of the task. Africa had been called "the white man's grave", and blacks were viewed as better able to acclimatize (Park, 2001). The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) was focused on the work of the gospel, but the white missionaries found that "the chief obstacle to the progress of the people was their moral degradation" (Strong, 1910, p. 138). The white missionaries believed that the

Africans' "coarse vices" made them "lower than brutes" and "indifferent if not opposed to a religion which summoned them to cleanness of heart and righteousness of conduct" (pp. 138-139). The Methodist Church had similar thoughts concerning the African people. General thought was that "these 'niggers' had no souls and were but the burnt-out husks of men", this quoted from a stalwart member of the church (Frobenius, 1913, pp1f, as quoted in Idowu, 1973, p.88). Frobenius's opinion changed after actually visiting Africa, and his conclusion was altogether different. He stated (Frobenius, 1913, p.xiv, as quoted in Idowu, 1973), "I have gone to the Atlantic again and again,…I have traversed the regions south of Sahara, that barrier to the outer world…But I have failed to find it governed by the 'insensible fetish'. I failed to find power expressed in degenerate bestiality alone…I discovered the souls of these peoples, and found that they were more than humanity's burnt-out husks…" (p.94).

The Southern Baptists believed that they had an obligation to the people of Africa: "Although they differ from us in complexion…We are under peculiar obligation to them as Africans….And as we hold a considerable portion of the African race in bondage, and enjoy the fruits of their labor, no obligation can be more imperative than ours is to send the gospel to those who remain in their native wilds" (Hornady, 1857). The Seventh-Day Adventists (SDA) had a "shut door" or "anti-mission" mentality, which did not begin to change until the period between 1863 and 1888 due to new converts forcing them to do so (Knight, 1999, pp. 68-81). Thomas and Henrietta Branch were the first African-American missionaries sent out to Africa by the SDAs, and it is interesting to note how the white and black written history differed in depicting the Branches service in Africa. White written history tells the story that Joseph Booth, the white missionary

supervising the work, was “delighted to learn that they are both to be left in the peaceful possession of the beautiful Plainfield estate” (Letter, February 14, 1905); while black written history tells the story that Booth “found it difficult to follow the leadership of Branch”, as he believed that he was better suited to leadership than Branch, and he returned to the United States rather than serve under Branch (Reynolds, 1984, p. 332).

Some Presbyterian missionaries in the Congo appeared to have had a solidarity that transcended race. Mrs. Snyder, a white missionary, felt that “the color line had no validity in the Congo” (Rogers, 2006, p. 82), and women “fostered a sense of community that included all women” (p. 84). Althea Brown Edmiston (1938, as cited in Kellersberger, 1947), a black missionary, noted, “On Christmas afternoon…As I sat at the festive board I realized that these men and women at the table with me, these fellow-Americans, some white, some Negro, these co-laborers with me in the Gospel, were as truly my own brothers and sisters as those in the flesh who were so far away” (pp. 15-17).

Seldom did the white mission boards consider Africans or American blacks capable of working independently of or on an equal basis with whites, however. In the thinking of at least one white missionary, for example, American black missionaries should have been willing to emigrate and never return to the United States, and once in Africa, subsist on less than the white missionary received. This attitude toward Africans and American black missionaries contributed to the independent church movements in both Africa and America and encouraged independent missionary movements as well (Pelt & Smith, 1960).

Summary

The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM), Methodist Church, Baptist Church, Seventh-Day Adventist Church, and the Presbyterian Church each promoted the inequality of blacks and whites in the work in Africa. Mission reports further shaped perceptions of Africans as totally depraved and in need of civilization and Christianity. White missionaries were clear in their feelings of superiority, and black missionaries "received lower pay, were expected to serve for longer periods in the field, had shorter and less frequent furloughs, climbed more slowly up the promotion ladder and rarely achieved seniority over whites, and their children were unlikely to be offered the educational benefits available to white missionaries" (Killingray, 2003, p. 18).

American blacks thus had difficulty in securing foreign appointments with Anglo mission agencies. Maria Fearing is a notable example. She sold her home and secured her own passage to the Congo after her application was rejected by the Presbyterian mission. As DuBois (1929) stated,

> Out of 158 African missionaries, the Protestant Episcopal Church has 1 American Negro; the Presbyterian, 2 out of 88; the Northern Baptists, 1 out of 20; the Methodist Episcopal Church, 5 out of 91; the American Board, 4 out of 97. Of 793 other missionaries to Africa sent out by American missionary societies, including the United Presbyterians, the United Missionary Society, the United Brethren, the African Inland Mission, the Friends, the Brethren-in-Christ, the Southern Baptists, the Women's General Mission Society of the United

> Presbyterian Church, the Lutherans, and the Sudan Interior Mission, there is not a single American Negro! (p. 168).

The Narratives of Black Missionaries and Mission Agencies

In this section, the views of black Christian mission agencies and their black missionaries are examined relating to the intersections of blackness, gender, and disability.

Black denominations encouraged African missions. The secretary of missions in the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church stated it as "the sympathy of blood" (Campbell, 2006, p. 142). American black mission boards (Lott Carey Baptist Foreign Mission Convention; National Baptist Convention) had a part in sending American black missionaries to Africa, but there were problems of opportunity. Discrimination prevented financial support, and there was some intimation of racism between the colonisers and the sent missionaries in Liberia. Europeans had taken control of African lands and did not desire American black missionaries in those lands. Europeans did not want Africans to be educated, fearing that they would then desire freedom and equal opportunities (Harr, W. C., 1945).

Some American blacks, like Maria Fearing, were motivated to Africa missions after hearing a furloughing missionary speak about Africa, while others, like Amanda Berry Smith, simply followed the call of God. Still others went on the promises of an improved life (Hodgson, 1980). Some American blacks went to Africa to evangelize while others wanted to explore the hidden secrets of the continent. Adventure was another reason American women gave for going to foreign lands as missionaries (Tucker, 1988). Others went to Africa as emigrants to escape the racism and discrimination

experienced in the United States (Shick T. W., 1977). An advantage of American black missionaries in Africa was that there "was no racial barrier, and [the missionaries] often lived right with the people" (Wold, 1968, p. 63).

American black missionaries viewed Africans as an opportunity "to demonstrate their own relative progress and thereby advance their claim to full American citizenship" (Campbell, 2006, p. 144). The view that Africa was the "special mission" of American blacks was convincing. It was felt that by improving the condition of the African, greater respect would be given to the black race (Collier-Thomas, 2010). For others it was "a way of refuting the white man's constant inference that the black African's savagery was but a mirror of the Negro's own" (Isaacs, 1963, p. 126). Letters and reports from American black female missionaries further appealed to women to serve in Africa. Single women were promoted as missionary teachers, but foreign mission boards of both black and white denominations held onto patriarchal beliefs, preferring to send married men to the foreign field, one reason being that wives could serve unpaid or with less pay than a single female missionary would require (Collier-Thomas, 2010).

Women were looked upon as an integral part in the evangelization of Africa. Alexander Crummell (1870) stated, "You can do no large great work for God in Africa unless you make female influence a prominent influence. Woman keeps Africa low and degraded, and hence only woman, under God, can raise Africa up" (p.). Crummell's view, that American black female missionaries were needed to teach African girls and women, encouraged some black women to become missionaries.

Many American black female single missionaries were motivated by a desire to serve and to perform a "special duty" to the land of their ancestors. They felt the call of God to serve in Africa. Others wanted to avoid marriage, and still others viewed Africa as a place free from the racism in America (Collier-Thomas, 2010). American black Christian women desired to evangelize Africa, being dissatisfied with the discrimination, disenfranchisement, and low status afforded them in the United States and African women in Africa (Tah Tata, 2002). Isaiah 1:17, which says, "Seek justice, rescue the oppressed, defend the orphan, and plead for the widow" inspired some American black women to go to Africa. These women played significant roles in the evangelization and uplifting of African women and children. The sentiment was that black women were better able to relate to the Africans' plight, having experienced similar conditions (Martin S. D., 1981; Tah Tata, 2002).

Maria Fearing and her fellow Presbyterian black female missionary Lucy Sheppard determined to change African women in the Congo, who would then uplift the entire society. These American women readily identified with the African women, whose experiences seemed to mirror those of American black women during enslavement in America (Campbell, 2006). Miss Fearing began to realize that, in order to have lasting change in the lives of Congolese girls, a better system of care was needed. She proposed taking in a few girls, preferably orphans, and educating them. As the word spread that the "foreign mother" loved children, small girls in the possession of others who considered them to be of little or no value, were brought to Miss Fearing. Many had "jiggers in their feet, lice in their hair, and their naked, undernourished bodies [were] covered with itch and sores" (Brown Edmiston, 1938, p. 16). Other girls came to her

after being rescued from kidnappers, and infants whose mothers had died were also brought to Miss Fearing. More and more girls came to the "foreign mother" until she had between forty and fifty girls in her home (Brown Edmiston, 1938).

Maria Fearing took excellent care of herself. Her home was always in order, and her clothes were clean. She took a daily rest, ate only simple foods, and for the first twelve years of service at the Luebo mission station, she was not seriously ill (Brown Edmiston, 1938). The establishment of the Pantops (named after a Presbyterian school in Virginia) Home for Girls in Luebo in 1895 is considered Miss Fearing's greatest work. The Home was for orphans, abandoned and kidnapped children, and runaways. Twins, thought to be a punishment or curse, were also welcomed into Pantops. The girls received academic instruction, practical training in housekeeping and cooking, as well as instruction in agriculture, cultivating a vegetable garden and raising chickens (Tah Tata, 2002). They also received teaching in Christianity. Her students called her "Mama wa Mputu", which means "mother from far away" (Speakin' Out News, 2009; Bradshaw-Miller, 2006; Sammon, 1989). She served as the Home's director until she left the Congo (Tah Tata, 2002). Both Maria Fearing and Lucy Sheppard endeavored to give these girls "equal educational opportunities, hoping to liberate them from becoming domestic drudges" (Phipps, 2002, p. 109).

The primary goal of American black women missionaries to Africa was to "promote the intellectual, social, material and health improvement of the African women and children" (Jordan, 1902; Penn & Bowen, 1902; Tah Tata, 2002). Education was seen as a key component in civilizing Africa, and American black women missionaries were the ones most likely to have a significant impact among African women and children.

Black women were among the chief supporters of the industrial education model, believing that "industrial education was geared to elevate and dignify black womanhood and to promote mental and material progress" (Tah Tata, 2002, p. 31). For many women, two choices were open to them – agrarian work or domestic work, although a few women obtained economic independence (Tah Tata, 2002). Continued oppression and discrimination on the field led other women to the conclusion that academic education was "an indispensable tool for the social and economic advancement of black people in a highly competitive environment" (Tah Tata, 2002, p. 37).

The African Methodist Episcopal Zion (AMEZ) Church holds the distinction of being the first independent American black Christian denomination in missions in Africa. The AMEZ Church stressed the importance of educating Africans. In 1899, the AMEZ Church established both a day school and a sabbath school in Kwitta on the Gold Coast of Africa (West Africa). Within fifteen years, the school had developed into Walters College. Under the direction of Rev. W.E. Shaw, M.D., an American black who had arrived from the United States ten years after the establishment of the school to oversee the supervision of the growing institution, the school was well-known all along the West African coast (Gershoni, 1997). In 1878 the first permanent African Methodist Episcopal (AME) mission in Africa was established in Brewersville, Liberia, where a church and school were built. The African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church led the way in education of Africans.

Ultimately, American black female missionaries had a significant impact in the education and empowerment of women and children on the African continent. Education was advanced as the key to a civilized society. "An uneducated mind is not prepared to

meet the great responsibilities of twentieth century civilization… Education prepares the mind for every walk of life…Africa's natives can best be reached by the American Negro" (Parks, 1902, pp. 299-300). Education was thought to be an equalizer, but educated blacks in colonial West Africa continued to be "rejected and ridiculed by Europeans for whom skin color was the overwhelming measure of value" (Moran, 1990). "Of all the activities of the African-American churches, it was perhaps their strenuous promotion of African education that did most to bolster, at one and the same time, Africans' self-image and the African-American myth" (Gershoni, 1997, p. 24). Missions in Africa provided basic education for Africans as a way to receive the Gospel message, but it was only American black churches that desired to provide more than a basic education to more than just "a few exceptional Africans" (p.24).

Blackness, Gender, and Disability

Some black women desired to serve in Africa to help in the uplifting of African women and the disabled who were being oppressed just as American black women had been. In traditional societies, the disabled in Africa were excluded from all aspects of society, including education. It has been said that "Disability is both a cause and a consequence of poverty, and disability is an important factor, along with gender, age, caste, and others, that interacts to impoverish people and keep them poor" (Mji, Maclachlan, Melling-Williams, & Gcaza, 2009, p. 1). African traditional religious understanding and practice placed little emphasis on the positive development of people with disabilities, attributing such disabilities to spiritual forces. The general belief was that those experiences were the effects of violations of the laws of the spirit-gods by others in the family or by the person with the disability (Mpofu & Harley, 2002;

Onwubiko, 1991). The person with the disability was being punished by the gods (Abosi, 2007; Anderson, 2004; Bowron, 1998; King, 1998; Magana, n.d.).

Malaria, sleeping sickness, smallpox, yaws, leprosy, and yellow fever were a few of the diseases that disabled Africans (Dunn, 1992; Williamson, 1960) and some missionaries (Rogers, 2006). Yaws was transmitted by contact, primarily attacking children and resulting in disfigurement and mutilation (Williamson, 1960). Hookworm and dysentery were also debilitating diseases (Dunn, 1992). Issues of mental health were also a problem in colonial Africa. "…the disturbances induced by abrupt changes in the way of life, by separation of the individual from his tribe and familiar patterns of existence, by the change from traditional beliefs and philosophies to a rationalistic and mechanical civilization" (Williamson, 1960, p. 441) had an effect on the education of Africans.

American black women missionaries were convinced that the gospel could not penetrate African women and childrens' hearts if they were afflicted with mental or physical disabilities (Berry, 1942), and educational programs included academic, industrial, and medical training. Illness was seen as a punishment. "[Africans] think, if smallpox, or any sickness of that kind comes to their town, they say it is because somebody has made the Devil mad" (Berry Smith, 1893, p. 383). Mrs. Smith considered Liberians "her" people, and stated "It is nonsense to say that a native African is not capable of learning" (p.399). Women had a hard lot in Liberia. "The poor women of Africa, like those of India, have a hard time. As a rule, they have all the hard work to do. They have to cut and carry all the wood, carry all the water on their heads, and plant all the rice" (p. 389).

Lastly, American black women missionaries developed survival skills to overcome diverse diseases, which inadvertently played a part in the myth that American blacks were more suitable for African service because of their ancestral ties to Africa (Tah Tata, 2002).

Summary

After the slave trade ended, missionary societies were formed, and missionaries began evangelizing in Africa. "Christianity debilitated and demoralised the Negro in America [and in] Africa too" (Bediako, 1995, p. 8). Carothers (1960) stated, "On the question as to whether the African's failure to appreciate the total relevant situation from the European point of view was (a) a mental disability in him, or (b) merely apparent to the European and due to the fact that matters which are important from the latter's point of view are really unimportant from the African's, [the author] concluded that it was not wholly accounted for by the second explanation, although, of course, the mental disability itself might well be explained on environmental grounds…most of the characteristics of African psychology can be seen as a failure to develop beyond Piaget's second stage of mental development" (pp. 449-450).

Those who have been at the receiving end of oppression may not automatically be intentional in promoting freedom and justice for others, which would require sensitization from within or from external sources. American black female missionaries journeyed to Africa with the same Western notions of what a woman should do. While a few American black missionaries attempted to understand the African and African culture, most saw Africans through a Western lens (Killingray, 2003). The reality when they arrived on the shores of Africa was quite different. Blacks faced the same prejudices and

discrimination from the white colonisers and the white missionaries. Those who had been sent by both black and white churches served at segregated mission stations (Jacobs S., 1996; Jacobs, S., 1982). Chapter 4 will explore how these narratives shaped the lived experiences of Black female missionaries who left for Africa to evangelize.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

If the voices of women are muted, the voices of women of color are all but non-existent.
- Sara Catania

Introduction

This chapter discusses how the narratives of white and black mission agencies shaped the lived experiences of Black female missionaries who left for Africa to evangelize.

Finding 1: White mission agencies misrepresented Africans as disabled, dependent, and uncivilized and in need of civilizing

Africa was considered the Dark Continent, the white man's grave, and espoused as such by white mission boards. White mission agencies and missionaries viewed Africans as ignorant and uneducated, as barbaric, savages, and uncivilized. White missionaries prohibited African men from marrying more than one wife, and they sought to do away with the dowry. Any African committed to Christ had to abandon these practices, as well as stop the practices of witchcraft and ancestor cults. However, instead of the positive effect the missionaries hoped for, Africans developed a negative attitude which presented as organized religious groups (Muga, 1975).

Lest one believe that it was only Christian goodwill that fueled whites' desire for Africans to return to Africa, John Randolph of Virginia spoke for many whites when he called the free African 'a great evil,' 'a nuisance,' and 'a bug-bear to every man who feels an inclination to emancipate his slaves' (Kirk, 1997; Sherwood, 1917, p. 223), and Caldwell called free Africans 'degraded' and 'ignorant.' (Kirk, 1997; Sherwood, 1917, p.223).

Finding 2: African-American Christian female missionaries' lived experiences in Africa changed over time, from affirming white Christian mission agencies false representations about Africans to refuting those representations

Some prominent free blacks believed in the inferiority of their own people (Kennedy, R., 2008), with some Christian missionaries viewing Africans as pagans and seeking to destroy all vestiges of their culture, replacing it with Western values and culture – the superior culture. The attitude of the missionaries reflected Aristotle's belief that some should rule…and that some are marked out for subjection (Muga, 1975).

Some emigrants to Liberia found themselves treating the Africans as they had been treated during slavery, and black missionaries to other parts of Africa did the same (eg., Fairhead, Geysbeek, Holsoe, & Leach, 2003; Park, 2001). While there was recognition of kinship with Africans, American black missionaries had been Westernized and viewed themselves as a civilized people. Consequently, they viewed some cultural beliefs and practices of Africans as negative (Killingray, 2003) and journeyed to Africa with the same Western notions of what a woman should do.

Once on the shores of Africa, however, American black missionaries found a different Africa than the one spoken of by whites in America. Fanny Coppin (1902) with the African Methodist Episcopal Church, made these claims about Africans: "The native African, as a rule, is virtuous and honest…They are disposed to be true to their professions, and faithful in what they believe. When they are persuaded that there is a better life, and indued to embrace it, they bring with them their characteristic sincerity. How great, then, is the need of missionaries who will not by their own unfaithfulness and

insincerity lower the standard of native custom". Presbyterian missionary wife Lucy Sheppard was eloquent upon seeing the brown water of the Congo (Phipps, 2002): "[It is] a symbol of the people whose bodies reflected its deep, dark sheen; whose souls had been as unfathomable as its depths; whose struggles for centuries had been as varied and as consuming as its rush to the sea; and whose future still remained as unknown as the depths of the river's bed in its whirlpool regions" (p. 100). As she remarked in 1902 (as quoted in Kellersberger, 1947 & Jacobs, 1982):

> When I saw the first native woman in her strip of cloth, her hair daubed with paint, her body smeared with grease and her mind filled with sin and superstition, I could not help but wonder if she could be changed. Knowing that His grace is sufficient and that His hand is at the helm I went to work cautiously, quietly, but surely. Thanks to His love and power many of these women now have changed lives, looking to Him as their Life and their Light. Some weeks ago, I invited a few to meet with me in my home for a prayer service. Fifty have been coming and we have emerged into a missionary society whose aim is to care for the sick, look up indifferent church members, and help others in need. We are learning to pray and to sing together (p. 24, p. 164).

African women and children were afflicted with diseases, and American black women missionaries provided health care in addition to education. African children in colonial Africa faced a myriad of stressors that had a profound impact on their emotional well-being and academic achievement in school. American black women missionaries recognized this and attempted to address those issues. Missionary women were adept in multiple roles, resulting from the multiple roles of their mothers, grandmothers, and even

themselves under the yoke of slavery. Slave women were acquainted with the types of plants needed for treatment of various ailments and used that knowledge in interactions with African traditional medical practices. Missionary women helped Africans to lessen their reliance on superstition and witch doctors, using the teachings of Jesus as a guide (Tah Tata, 2002). In colonial Africa, it was Christian missionaries who introduced education to those with disabilities (Chimedza & Peters, 2001).

Finding 3: African-American Christian missionaries posed threats to the political, gender, and social hierarchy of white missionaries in Africa

American black missionaries continued to experience discrimination in Africa once they arrived on the shores of Africa. Blacks faced the same prejudices and discrimination from the white colonizers and met resistance from white colonial governments as well as from white missionaries upon arrival in Africa. White missionaries believed that black missionaries had a lack of civilization and interpreted that as being unfit for missionary service and incapable of being a part of the body politic. Women in particular, suffered discrimination and oppression in their quest to share the gospel. Despite having higher education than some whites, for example, black missionaries were constantly reminded of their blackness (Tah Tata, 2002). American black women missionaries, "in particular, were patronized by white colleagues more than were men" (Killingray, 2003, p. 19).

An example of these threats is that of Seventh-Day Adventists (SDA) missionaries Thomas and Henrietta Branch, who had difficulties with other white mission agencies in Nyasaland. The Branches, the first black SDA missionaries sent to Africa, taught the true gospel, "Many of the natives come to us, and ask to be taught here,

because of the Sabbath" (Advent Herald, 03 March 1904), which did not sit well with the white missionaries from other denominations. In correspondence with the Home Office, Thomas Branch wrote, "All the different missionaries in British Central Africa held a joint meeting, and agreed that if this Seventh-day Adventist mission did not come in and join with them, and work as they worked, we should not be allowed to use the government land for school purposes" (Advent Herald, 03 January 1907).

In January 1915, there was the Nyasaland Uprising, led by John Chilembwe. The uprising was quelled after eleven days, but not before Chilembwe and a few of his followers were killed. After the uprising, many white colonisers in Nyasaland believed that the teachings of African-American women and men had induced a spirit of independence and insubordination among Africans, which resulted in the uprising. The Nyasaland Native Rising Commission recommended that "only properly accredited missions should be allowed in the Protectorate..." and stated that American blacks were "politically objectionable" (Jacobs S. M., 1990, p. 390).

A second example is Presbyterian missionary William Sheppard, who inserted himself into the political climate in the Congo. King Leopold of Belgium, coloniser of the Congo, and his "sovereign" rule in the Congo Free State in the late 1880s reduced the African population from twenty million to less than nine million in fifteen years. The King was primarily concerned with accumulating wealth, and the Congo was rich in land, ivory, and rubber. To gain compliance, the King had his soldiers cut off the hands and other body parts of those who refused to enter the forests to obtain the uncultivated rubber (Jackson, 1970; Thompson, 2002). In the early 1890s, the market for rubber was greatly expanding. Cultivated rubber from South America

and parts of Africa was yielding cash dividends. King Leopold had a desire to explore and exploit any resources found in the Congo, and in 1891, the Belgian colonial government had imposed taxes on the Africans and began a policy of forced labor through the Kasai Company to harvest rubber (Lewis, 2000). Wild rubber was difficult to harvest, and Africans were loath to do the work. The government, on orders from the King, developed brutal methods in order to maintain rubber export levels. Each village was given a monthly quota of rubber to be harvested. Failure to meet the quota led to sanctions of increasing brutality: beating with a whip made of hippopotamus hide (a chikoti); sometimes raping wives; and killing as an example to the village (Thompson, 2002).

Women and children were taken hostage in an attempt to force husbands to harvest the rubber. Quotas were meted out to villages, and those failing to meet the daily quota saw the children of the village have both their feet and hands cut off (Rogers, 2006). One common practice was placing heavy chains, including steel collars on their necks, on wives and girls who were then forced to stand within sight of their fathers and husbands as an inducement to work. Approximately half the population, ten million people, lost their lives as a result of these practices (Rogers, 2006). Bullets were not to be used for game hunting; they were to be used for the killing of Africans. Guards were to cut off the right hand of each African killed, and the hands were tallied against the bullet count. Guards devised a plan to save their bullets for game hunting – they began cutting off the hands of living Africans and sending those to the government officials (Thompson, 2002).

The perpetrated atrocities of King Leopold began to be noticed by the international community. Sheppard penned missives about the practices, and the ensuing scandal involved the American and British governments (Lewis, 2000; Rogers, 2006). Those practices included cutting off the ears, penises, noses, and sometimes heads of men who did not fulfill the rubber quota established by the Belgian King. Men were also shot or forced to eat feces from the latrines of Europeans (Edgerton, 2002). To counter these claims, Leopold and his supporters asserted that it was a traditional custom to cut off the hands and feet of Africans. This assertion was roundly denounced by missionaries in the Congo (Thompson, 2002). The Kasai Company filed a libel suit against not only William Sheppard but against William Morrison as well, as head of the mission station; so the two men traveled to the trial site. Lucy Sheppard remained at the station and wrote (Kellersberger, 1947):

> The day after Mr. Sheppard left for the trial, I became seriously ill. The doctor was now only forty miles away and in twenty-four hours he was at my bedside. My illness was due to fever and to the dreadful nervous strain which I had undergone for days. Think? I could not allow myself to think! My husband, held by his enemies, my two children in Virginia, and my mother in New Jersey – all separated from me by thousands of miles. I felt the presence of His everlasting arms, and I was comforted by the words, '*Lo, I am with you alway*.' On the day of the trial we fasted and prayed. Mrs. Morrison and I waited almost breathlessly for the return of our loved ones. As the *Lapsley* came steaming in, hundreds of Christians began singing hymns and waving their hands and shouting for joy. It was a glorious time! – A time for thanksgiving (p. 26).

Despite being instrumental in bringing to light the atrocities of King Leopold, William Sheppard experienced inequity in the Congo from William Morrison, who treated him as an inferior (Kennedy, 2002; Phipps, 2002). Morrison used Sheppard's adulterous liaisons as a reason to dismiss him from service (Kennedy, 2002), and the Sheppards were recalled in March 1910 (Campbell, 2006; Kennedy, 2002; Phipps, 2002). White missionaries also had African mistresses but were allowed to remain in service in Congo.

A third example is that of Henrietta Ousley, the first black woman sent out by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Mission (ABCFM), who served in Mozambique with her husband from 1884 to 1893 (Missionary Herald, 1884). In 1890, the Ousleys returned to the United States in order for Benjamin Ousley to receive medical treatment for a malady he had contracted before sailing for Mozambique in 1884. The Ousleys returned to the station in 1892, but the health situation of Benjamin Ousley again began to deteriorate. Coupled with difficulties with the white missionaries at the station and receiving no assistance from the Foreign Mission Board (the ABCFM solution was to stop the appointments of any American black missionaries to Mozambique), the Ousleys resigned and returned to the United States in 1893 (Williams W. L., 1982).

Miss Nancy Jones, a single missionary sent out by the ABCFM to Mozambique, is another example of the threat that black missionaries posed to the hierarchy of white missionaries. Prejudice from the white missionaries caused Miss Jones to write to the ABCFM Foreign Mission Board in 1897 asking to serve in an area that was unhealthy to whites. The Board offered no help, so on 27 May 1897 (Williams, 1982), eight months after the arrival of a white missionary couple and a single white female missionary,

Nancy Jones resigned from the Mission, citing her ailing mother's need for her assistance as the reason for returning to the United States (ABCFM Papers, 1897, No. 87, and 1897, No. 92, as cited in Jacobs, 1982). Miss Jones arrived in Boston on 25 October 1897 and admitted to Judson Smith that her reason for resigning was prejudice against her by several of the white missionaries who did not want to live with her at Mt. Silinda (Jacobs S. M., 1995; Jacobs S. M., 1990). After a white missionary couple and a white single female missionary arrived at the station on 10 September 1896, Miss Jones was no longer allowed to teach in the school or work with the children; and instead was given the tasks of cooking, buying food, planting a garden, and supplying the mission with vegetables. The white missionaries insisted that Miss Jones pay for the room and board of the children and African friends who visited her at the station (ABCFM Papers, 1897, No. 90, as cited in Jacobs, 1982). They further claimed that she was not a fit missionary, despite her knowledge of the local language. The situation became so unbearable for Miss Jones that she resigned (Jacobs S. M., 1995; Jacobs, S.M., 1990). Once in the United States, Miss Jones asked the Prudential Committee to allow her to withdraw her resignation and be assigned to an area where white missionaries could not live well. There she could work alone or with other Negro missionaries. Her request was denied, and she never returned to Africa (ABCFM Papers, 1897, No. 90, as cited in Jacobs, 1982).

After serving for twelve years at the Luebo station, Presbyterian missionary Maria Fearing was in need of a rest. At sixty-eight, most of her teeth were gone, and her eyes were weak. Even so, she had no desire to return to the United States, but at the urging of her fellow missionaries and after meditation and prayer, she returned to the United States,

where she received “a royal welcome” in her home town. None of her family had expected to see her alive again. She received medical treatment for her teeth and eyes and was ready to return to Africa after some months (Brown Edmiston, 1938).

Once back at the station, Miss Fearing resumed the work wholeheartedly, but after eight more years of service, she again began to show signs of tiredness. Again her fellow missionary workers urged her to return to the United States for furlough. After a year in the United States, she informed the Committee that she was ready to return to the station, but the Committee replied that they were hesitant to send her alone. This shocked her, and she dispatched a reply. Upon receiving the letter, the Committee assured Miss Fearing that she could return to Africa once there was a traveling companion. In June 1918, it seemed that Lillian Thomas DeYampert, a former housemate of Miss Fearing’s who had sailed with her to the United States the previous year with her husband, was returning to Africa with her husband. Maria Fearing was to accompany them. Their bags were packed and tickets were purchased when Mrs. DeYampert received the news that she had a serious physical condition, high blood pressure (Edgerton, 2002), which made it “unadvisable for her to cross the ocean then or at any future date!” (Brown Edmiston, 1938, p. 29). With no one to travel with, Maria Fearing never returned to her beloved Africa. She was eighty years old.

At many African mission stations, the first converts were women, which could have been attributed to the social and political insignificance of women that was the prevailing feeling at the time. However their presence in the Church was not insignificant and was strengthened by the biblical concept of equality (Hastings, 1993).

Africans responded to missionary zeal by converting to Christ. Once converted, Africans began to realize that the Bible supported their desire for African autonomy.

Conclusion

This chapter discussed three findings: (1) White mission agencies misrepresented Africans as disabled, dependent, and uncivilized and in need of civilizing; (2) African-American Christian female missionaries' lived experiences in Africa changed over time, from affirming white Christian mission agencies false representations about Africans to refuting those representations; and (3) African-American Christian missionaries posed threats to the political, gender, and social hierarchy of white missionaries in Africa. Chapter five will address the significance in America today of understanding these historical intersectionalities of blackness, gender, disability, and Christianity.

CHAPTER FIVE
CONCLUSION

It is not…the white woman vs. the black…the cause of woman vs. man….
Nay, 'tis woman's strongest vindication for speaking
that *the world needs to hear her voice*.
- Anna Julia Cooper

In 1903, W.E.B. DuBois posed the question, "How does it feel to be a problem?" More than one hundred years later, that question remains relevant for African-American women. Erevelles (2011) expounded and posed three questions, "Why do some bodies matter more than others; what historical conditions make some bodies matter more than others; and why does it not even matter to us that some bodies are actually invisible"? (pp. 6-7).

Racism and paternalism is well documented in historical mission record. Those with disabilities have been called "useless eaters" (Mostert, 2002), and those who have been at the receiving end of oppression may not automatically be intentional in promoting freedom and justice for others. In slavery, skin color (blackness) was defined as a pathological symptom in relation to "normal" white skin (Leary, 2005, p. 81). Lighter skinned black slaves could work in the master's house, and "light skin and straight hair became associated with an improved quality of life" (p. 140). There are American black women today who view their blackness as a liability (eg., Anonymous, 2009; Leary, 2005; Prince, 2007; Woodson, 1990 Reprint). They powder their faces, straighten their hair, and some surgically alter their appearance in order to conform to white standards of beauty, look more white, and thus, more attractive. The stigma from slavery that light-skin color is better than dark-skin color also exists today and continues to pervade the self-perception of many blacks (Battle, 2007); with some blacks

contributing to this stigma, whether inadvertently or by intent (Anonymous, 2009). Blackness (skin color) may be viewed negatively in America, and an added disability can have a strong effect on self-worth, as the identity is filtered through the disability. A strong identity, either as a black or as a person with a disability, at times characterizes the racial identity of blacks, and self-worth may be specific to the disability or when the disability is first diagnosed (Alston, Bell, & Feist-Price, 1996). According to Connor & Ferri (2005), blacks have an "artificial disability of color" (p. 107); which Miles (1994) relates to disabled black students "experienc[ing] the most severe…undereducation and miseducation compared to other disability groups" (p. 349). Black females are one of the most disadvantaged groups in America and are at greater risk for depression and low self-esteem; and when a disability is added, the risk is exacerbated (Alston & Mc Cowan, 1994).

Cohen (1970) noted that the question of blackness was not found in ancient times but came into being during Christian times, and declared, "…The white said it was impossible to mix with colored people on grounds of equality. Having said so he proceeded to make it impossible. Having made it impossible he produced the manufactured impossibility as proof of the soundness of the generalization" (pp. 313-314). There were three groups – segregationists, antiracists, and assimilationists – who drove sentiments about blacks in the United States. During the 1940s, assimilationists made the term 'racism' popular but distinguished themselves from the segregationists who they believed were racist because of the claim of biological inferiority. The assimilationists, on the other hand, did not believe they were racists because cultural and behavioral inferiority were deemed as the Word of God (Kendi, 2016). Both groups are

racists, as a racist idea is “any concept that regards one racial group as inferior or superior to another racial group in any way” (p. 5). Gender racism is calling black women as a group stupid, and these racist theological ideas were “critical to sanctioning the growth of American slavery and making it acceptable to the Christian churches” (p. 6). The history of oppression of African Americans has not made them inferior; it is the opportunities for blacks that are inferior (Kendi, 2016).

The double oppression of blackness and gender is disturbing. Add to that, disability, and it becomes triple jeopardy. The passage of the Fifteenth Amendment in 1870 giving Black men the right to vote caused some concern among African-American women. Black men were now in the “patriarchal world”, white women remained “cherished and envied”, and black women were “no longer to be counted as three-fifths of a person; she was zero” (Locke, as quoted in Clark Hine, King, & Reed, 1995, p. 233).

In the unanimous 1954 decision in Brown v. Board of Education, Chief Justice Earl Warren wrote, “…the policy of separating the races is usually interpreted as denoting the inferiority of the Negro group. A sense of inferiority affects the motivation of a child to learn”. O’Connor (2006) suggests that black students have internalized this sense of inferiority which has “retarded…their educational and mental development” (p. 317). She argues that in schools across America, whites are the “normative referent for interpreting how black students perform in school” (p. 322), which makes the orientation toward what is it about being black that produces underachievement (O’Connor, 2006). Today’s non-white students, including both disabled and non-disabled who are deemed ‘at risk’, and those whose command of English is limited, have been designated as social outcasts (eg., Alston & Bell, 1996; Erevelles, 2011; Miles, 1994; Mpofu & Harley, 2006;

Stuart, 1992). Educational practices "support difference if and only if difference can be controlled, disguised, and/or rendered invisible" (Erevelles, 2011, p. 86), rendering disabled people being perceived as neither autonomous nor normal. Women have also been perceived in the same way (Erevelles, 2011).

Studies have shown that there is a stigma attached to having a disability (Borum, 2001; Jones, 1995; Whilby, 2000); and the mental health and academic self-concept are negatively affected, which then affects academic performance (Kizzie, 2009). Harry (2002) suggests that the greater the stigma attached to an ethnic group, the more difficult it is for mainstream professionals to "recognize culture strengths…different from their own" (p. 131) because assumptions are made, and services provided are the views of the provider and not the user.

A new cycle has emerged, where past gains are no longer being felt or seen in the context of the optimism of the social movement of the past. Increasing black poverty, particularly in households headed by females is one reason, but the most defining reason is the "conservative reaction that [has] turned into a crimson backlash of considerable ferocity" (Giddings, 1984, p. 6). The ideals of opportunity and equality for all have been reinterpreted for people of color, women (p. 6), and for those with disabilities. The argument that slavery kept African Americans sane was circulated well into the 1870s, with the idea that manumission would cause mental illness in the freed slaves (Bell, 2011). These historical practices continue to have relevance today, with the blame for the continued lack of progress of African-Americans put on black female-headed households (Erevelles, 2011).

There are three different ways of looking at intersectionality – anticategorical, intracategorical, and intercategorical. An anticategorical framework renders social categories like blackness, gender, and disability as merely social constructions, while an intracategorical framework looks at particular social categories at points of intersections. An intercategorical framework looks at how the social categories are structured and enmeshed in historical contexts (Erevelles, 2011; Erevelles and Minear, 2010). Disabled persons are often characterized as inferior to whites; but it is unlikely that a person will sleep one night and wake up the next morning as a different race. "Disability is, arguably, the only identity that one can acquire in the course of an instant" (Bell, 2011, p. 1). It is not only racialized but blackness also "signifies almost as a disability as it denies or regulates access to certain spaces" (p. 52). Oduyoye (2004) gives a modern-day rendering of Isaiah, in part saying, "…Those who are oppressed will be encouraged and enabled to free themselves. Abilities rather than disabilities will be what counts. All who are blind to their own and others' oppression will come to new insights. And God will pardon all at the jubilee. It will be a new beginning for all. That is liberation" (p. 69).

In light of the findings, black women "must search history for a new element, something that in a way is less familiar to us – ourselves….This has made us indispensable…to everyone but ourselves" (Giddings, 1984, pp. 6-7). Black women must "search our history for an answer to the question, who are we as ourselves…which will evoke the extraordinary will, spirit, and transformative vision that can reconnect us to loved ones, communities, and reform movements in revolutionary ways…the faith in progress that our forebears taught was not only in terms of our status in society, but in our ability to gain increasing control of our own lives" (p. 7).

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APPENDIX A

American Black Female Missionaries in Africa
Up to 1934

Presbyterian Church	**First Appointed**	**Years of Service**
Liberia:		
Mrs. James Priest	1843	
Mary Lepien	1846	
Mrs. Harrison Ellis		
Louise Coke	1848	
Mrs. Edward Wilmot Blyden		
Congo:		
Lucy Gantt Sheppard	1894	16
Lillian Thomas DeYampert	1894	24
Maria Fearing	1894	24
Althea Brown Edmiston	1902	35
Annie Katherine Taylor Rochester	1906	08
Hulda Claudine Blamoville		
Cameroon:		
Mrs. Susan Underhill	1927	
American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions		
Mozambique:		
Henrietta Bailey Ousley	1884	09
Nancy Jones	1888	09
Mrs. Laura Bates		
Methodist Church		
Liberia:		
Eunice Sharp	1834	
Lavinia Johnson	1844	
Sarah Maria Reynolds	1852	
Lucinda Hazard Burns	1857	
Ruby Williams		
Angola:		
Susan Collins	1890	19
Martha Drummer	1906	16

United Brethren in Christ Church	**First Appointed**	**Years of Service**
Sierra Leone:		
Mrs. Joseph Gomer	1870	24
Rachel Allen Evans	1870	19
Mrs. Kelley M. Kemp	1880	05
Liberia:		
Mrs. Alexander Camphor		
Mrs. Joseph Sherrill		
Seventh Day Adventist Church		
Nyasaland (Malawi):		
Mrs. Henrietta Branch	1902	05
South Africa:		
Mrs. Henrietta Branch	1907	01
Ghana:		
Mrs. J.M. Hyatt	1902	
African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church		
Mrs. Carrie Cartwright	1876	14+
Young Men's Christian Association		
Cameroon:		
Mrs. C.H. Richardson	1878	
Mrs. Thomas Lewis Johnson	1878	2 weeks
Baptist Church		
Liberia:		
Mrs. Lott Carey	1821	
Mrs. John Day	1830	21
Mrs. Catherine Day	1852	07
Mrs. William Colley	1884	
Mrs. Hattie Presley	1884	7 months
Mrs. J.J. Diggs	1887	
Mrs. Mattie Topp	1887	5 months
Susie Taylor	1912	03
Eliza Davis	1912	26
Emma Delaney	1912	08
Mrs. D.R. Horton	1917	
Mrs. Delia Harris	1919	
Pricilla Bryon	1919	
Rachel Tharps Boone	1919	07
Mrs. Francis B. Watson	1920	
Sarah Williamson Coleman	1924	08

Baptist Church	**First Appointed**	**Years of Service**
Ruth Occomy	1928	
Mildred Griffin	1928	
Ruth Morris-Graham	1929	
Naomi Crawford	1934	
Elizabeth Coles Bouey		
Sierra Leone:		
Lucy Ann Henry Coles	1887	7 ½
Cameroon:		
Mrs. Thomas L. Johnson	1878	01
Congo:		
Dr. Louise (Lulu) Fleming	1887	12
Nora A. Gordon	1888	12
Clara Howard	1890	02
Mrs. John Ricketts	1890	03
Mrs. Eva Boone	1900	05
Nigeria:		
Mrs. John Ricketts	1893	
South Africa:		
Mrs. Lillie Johns	1897	less than one year
Mamie Branton Tule	1897	
Lucinda Thomas East	1909	11
Malawi:		
Emma Delaney	1902	03
African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church		
Sierra Leone:		
Sarah Gorham	1889	05
Fannie Worthington Ridgel	1893	01
Josephine Heard		
Emily Kinch		
Grace Johnson		
Nora F. Taylor		
Liberia:		
Mrs. Rosanna Cartwright	1876	04
Amanda Berry Smith	1882	08
Mrs. Carrie Cartwright	1885	
Fannie Worthington Ridgel	1894	

AME Church	**First Appointed**	**Years of Service**
Angola:		
Susan Collins	1887	
South Africa:		
Fanny Ann Jackson Coppin	1902	
Episcopal Church		
Liberia:		
Mrs. Elizabeth Caesar	1831	
Elizabeth Mars Johnson Thomson	1832	33
Mrs. Sarah Crummell	1853	18
Mrs. James Thompson	1862	03
Mrs. Samuel Ferguson	1885	