

# MABEL CARNEY AND THE HARTFORD THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY: RURAL DEVELOPMENT, “NEGRO EDUCATION,” AND MISSIONARY TRAINING<sup>1</sup>

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Mabel Carney (1886-1969), was a well-known innovator in Rural, African-American, and Colonial Education at Teachers College, Columbia University (1919-42). Little attention has been given to her work at the Kennedy School of Missions, Hartford Theological Seminary (1928-42). This paper details Carney's interests and accomplishments in missionary training as well as the conceptual difficulties she experienced in integrating her professional ideas with her African-American and African experiences regarding race, culture, and discrimination. Her friendship with Charles T. Loram, Franz Boas, and W.E.B. Dubois, and with the Editorial Board of the *Journal of Negro Education*, broadened her exposure to racial and cultural issues. Her travels in Africa and Canada also exposed her to new ideas and modes of living. She steadily expanded and vitalized Missionary Education at Hartford while also secularizing the curriculum. The paper concludes by contextualizing her accomplishments in the religious and social conflicts of her active career and retirement.

Mabel Carney (1886-1969) fut une pionnière, bien connue, de l'éducation rurale, afro-américaine et coloniale au *Teacher College* de la *Columbia University*, de 1919 à 1942. Mais on a porté peu d'attention au travail qu'elle a accompli de 1928 à 1942 à la *Kennedy School of Missions*, du *Hartford Theological Seminary*. Ce texte expose en détails tant les préoccupations et les réalisations de l'enseignement missionnaire de Carney que les difficultés conceptuelles qu'elle connut en intégrant ses idées professionnelles à ses expériences afro-américaines et africaines relativement à la race, à la culture et à la discrimination. Son amitié pour Charles T. Loram, Franz Boas et W.E.B. Dubois ainsi que le Comité de rédaction du *Journal of Negro Education* élargirent son expérience des enjeux raciaux et culturels. Ses voyages en Afrique et au Canada la mirent en contact avec de nouvelles idées et de nouveaux modes de vie. Elle développa et vivifia constamment la formation missionnaire à Hartford, tout en laïcisant le programme. En conclusion, cet article met en perspective ses réalisations lors des luttes religieuses et sociales qu'elle mena pendant sa carrière active et sa retraite.

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1 For readability, a series of terms carrying more than descriptive meaning in historical context, which were recognized at that time in that light, will be marked in their first instance with quotation marks and subsequently with capitalization.

Mabel Carney (1885-1969) was an educational pioneer and race relations expert whose career paralleled the rise of the modern multi-department university in North America. Long before the advent of programs focusing on ethnicity, race, gender, or Area Studies (Africa in particular), Mabel Carney was concentrating on all these areas in her teaching and research at Teachers College, Columbia University. Although in recent years both the enduring quality of her contributions to Rural Education and her special status in academia have attracted attention from historians of education, she still remains relatively unknown.<sup>2</sup>

Her professional correspondence detailing her career at Teachers College, Columbia University, provides scant mention of her fifteen-year association with the Kennedy School of Missions, Hartford Theological Seminary, in Hartford, Connecticut. This separation of interests involved more than observing the ethical protocols of moonlighting, for her correspondence in the Hartford Archives suggests missionary training was a deeply held personal commitment. This essay discusses the formative influences on her career, contextualizing her interests in missionary work, and then details her involvement and contributions in Missionary Education.

BORN IN CARTHAGE, Missouri, Carney was one of ten children of an Irish-American mother and Irish immigrant father. Her economically difficult childhood was spent in the Oklahoma Territory and her high school years in rural Marseilles, LaSalle County, Illinois. Her father attended a Catholic boarding school in Ireland, and, while raising the Carney children in a nominally Catholic home, maintained a life-long antipathy toward denominational religion. Carney's correspondence provides little reference to the development of her own religious beliefs except to suggest home influences as the starting point of her mature commitment to Universalism.<sup>3</sup>

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2 See Richard Glotzer, "The Career of Mabel Carney: The Study of Race and Rural Development in the United States and South Africa," *International Journal of African Historical Studies* 29, 2 (1996): 309-36; Kathleen Weiler, "Women and Progressive Education: The Case of Mabel Carney," American Educational Research Association Annual Conference (AERA), Seattle, Washington, April 10-14, 2001; Alice Carney, "Mabel Carney, Adult Educator, Champion of Rural Education" (Ed.D. diss., Northern Illinois University, 1993).

3 Carney's writings and activism melded her beliefs in progressive education with her mature Universalist beliefs. She supported a social gospel in which religious belief was translated into a disciplined and socially responsible life leading to individual development and collective betterment. The Universalist belief in universal salvation corresponds with belief in equality between all peoples and rejects the notion that any single set of beliefs, rituals, or professions leads to salvation. Endorsement of gender equality and the ordination of women is a long-standing part of Universalist belief. Committed throughout her career to the advancement of women, Carney spoke on behalf of women's suffrage in her first years at Teachers College, Columbia. Carney's social

Carney attended the new state normal school at Dekalb, Illinois, in 1901-2 and then taught third grade in her home town of Marseilles before completing her teaching certificate in 1904. She then taught in McNabb, Illinois, in Putnam County for two years (1904-6), going from there to Macomb, Illinois, where she taught at the state normal school for three years.<sup>4</sup> In 1909 she entered Teachers College, Columbia University, for a third year of study, marking her transition from the classroom to teacher training and administration.<sup>5</sup>

By age 32 Carney had held a variety of administrative posts, including directorships of Rural Education Departments at Cheney, Washington (1910-11) and Normal, Illinois (1911-14). At Normal she wrote *Country Life and the Country School*, a comprehensive overview of rural schools and their development based on her ten years in education.<sup>6</sup> Subsequently she was named Supervisor of Teacher Training for the state of Minnesota (1914-17). She had caught the attention of the Teachers College Dean, James Earl Russell, in 1914, but was not enticed back to New York until 1917 when she was offered a half-time junior

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instincts were egalitarian. Her ideal community leaders, who along with good teachers were the most important components of rural education and community development, were not necessarily drawn from the economic and social elite. See David Robinson, *The Unitarians and the Universalists* (Westport Ct.: Greenwood Press, 1985), 123-41; Personal Communication, Alice Carney, July 1996, Chicago, Illinois. Alice Carney (no relation to Mabel) interviewed Mabel Carney's youngest sister, then in her mid-eighties, for her doctoral dissertation.

4 In 1904 the 19-year-old Carney moved to the Quaker community of McNabb, Illinois, where she taught in McNabb's one-room school while organizing the construction of the John Swaney Consolidated School, a rarity in rural Illinois in those times. An introduction to new religious and social ideas in this small but enterprising community, while she herself held important responsibilities, must have been a thought-provoking experience for one so young. Predating the town by sixty years, the Quakers had established the Clear Creek Meeting House on that site in 1841. McNabb's Scottish Methodist founders (1902) were also civic-minded and generous, supporting education, helping construct McNabb's first Methodist Church, and later establishing the McNabb Mutual Telephone Company. Milbank Memorial Library, Teachers College, Columbia University, James Earl Russell Papers (hereafter J.E. Russell Papers), Public Relations File, Mabel Carney, Professional Bibliography of Mabel Carney, c. 1925.

5 Untitled biographic obituary, J.E. Russell Papers, Public Relations File, 1969.

6 In *Country Life* Carney wrote that a harnessing of the natural and social sciences in the service of rural life could be achieved under the leadership of properly trained experts and community leaders. Imbued with the values of the Country Life Movement, she wrote that science and religion could contribute to a "spiritualization" of farm life by freeing people from dreary routines and poverty and affording them the opportunity for the development of middle-class culture in the home and community. Institutions promoting scientific agriculture and rural education, like co-operative extension, deserved strong community support, as did the transformation of one-room schools into graded, diversified institutions. Her beliefs about rural development permeate her writings and remained core ideas throughout her educational career. See Mabel Carney, *Country Life and the Country School* (Chicago: Rowe-Peterson & Company, 1912).

faculty appointment.<sup>7</sup> Her background, keen and broad-ranging intellect, and rapid academic progress (B.A. 1917, M.S. 1919), led to a full-time faculty appointment as Associate Professor of Rural Education at Teachers College, Columbia, in 1919.

### **Race, Culture, and Africa**

When Carney joined the faculty of Teachers College, Columbia, there was unease about the ethnic composition of the student body and the University's proximity to the expanding African-American community of Harlem.<sup>8</sup> Apprehensive about crime and potential racial confrontations, Columbia's administrators were also aware of the significance of Harlem's 152,000 residents as citizens of the self-proclaimed "Negro capital of the world." The vibrant intellectual, political, and cultural life of Harlem both amplified and contributed to the national debate over how African-Americans could best achieve economic and social justice in American society.

The mass migration of African-Americans from the rural south to northern cities during World War One challenged the underpinnings of rural, manual-arts-oriented Industrial Education. Cities such as New York, Detroit, Chicago, and Omaha provided factory jobs, comparatively better schools, and a less oppressive environment. These closed communities also provided opportunities for African-Americans in business, law, medicine, education, religious ministries, and, in a segregated world, mortuary services. Newspapers, live theatre, art, music, and other forms of cultural expression also took root in this environment. Addressing this aspiring middle-class audience, W.E.B. DuBois challenged the gradualist orientation of Industrial Education and its most prominent advocate, Booker T. Washington.

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7 James Earl Russell recruited Carney, like many members of the Teachers College faculty, from the Midwest. She had turned down an initial summer appointment for 1915. Russell's interest stemmed from Carney's professional reputation and the favourable attention she received for *Country Life and the Country School*. J.E. Russell Papers, Folder 185, Russell to Carney, 9 Oct. 1914.

8 Both race and ethnicity posed challenges to this avowedly white Anglo-Saxon Protestant institution as it sought to cope with what it regarded as an assault by unassimilated immigrant groups, most notably Jewish students. By the mid-1920s, "objective testing," entrance interviews, and use of applicant photographs had turned the tide, keeping outsiders at acceptable levels. Simultaneously, open admissions came to include the highly selective admission of small numbers of colonial Africans and African-Americans, following in the tradition of rare admissions in the nineteenth century when Columbia was a bastion of Lincoln Republicanism. See Carleton Mabee, *Black Education in New York State from Colonial to Modern Times* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1979), 247-59; Gilbert Osofsky, *Harlem: The Making of a Ghetto* (New York: Harper and Row, 1963); Harold Wechsler, *The Qualified Student* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1977).

Supported by religious leaders and paternalistic white philanthropists, Washington argued for basic economic development achieved through self-help. Literacy skills and training in manual occupations promised steady employment and respectability. Economic security in turn would create the environment for the development of social and cultural life centred on home, family, and church. Although DuBois was not opposed to manual arts training in itself, his advocacy of liberal arts and professional education and fuller African-American participation in society flew in the face of gradualism and subservient accommodation to white domination.<sup>9</sup>

The positions taken by DuBois and Washington reflected attempts to either resist or accommodate Northern industrialists and Southern agrarians in achieving a mutually beneficial framework for controlling, exploiting, and channelling African-American labour and aspirations. Rather than permitting African-Americans to share avenues of mobility with other Americans – including immigrants – or develop their own paths, industrial and agrarian philanthropies would augment state efforts at containment and control.<sup>10</sup> DuBois was not alone in rejecting Industrial Education and its implications.

Within walking distance of Columbia were the headquarters of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the National Urban League (NUL), and the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA). Their publications, *Crisis*, *Opportunity* and *The Negro World*, respectively, offered readers a range of perspectives on important issues. Marcus Garvey, the charismatic leader of the UNIA, offered readers of *The Negro World* a compelling critique of the African-American relationship to Africa and colonialism. His career was to prove meteoric, but the spectre of a convention adopting his *Declaration of Rights of the Negro Peoples of the World* (1920) and mass parades offered a symbolic challenge to the status quo that could not go unanswered.<sup>11</sup>

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9 Ku Klux Klan activity was growing nationally in this period and immigration policies informed by the eugenics movement culminated in restrictive immigration policies for eastern and southern Europe and a blanket rejection of Asian immigration through the Asian Exclusion Act (1924). Between 1877 and 1915 there were 3,000 lynchings in the South, including in 1913 the mob lynching of Leo Frank, a member of Atlanta's Jewish community.

10 William H. Watkins, James H. Lewis, Victoria Chou, eds., *Race and Education* (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 2001), 40-46.

11 Marcus Garvey (1887-1940) was born in St. Ann's Bay, Jamaica. As a young man he was active in labour issues. He subsequently travelled to England, South America, and Central America. In 1914 he founded the Universal Negro Improvement Association, which he incorporated in the United States in 1916. This mass movement, claiming nearly two million members, advocated racial pride and a return to Africa. Garvey's economic enterprises to this end were poorly run and led to economic disaster. In 1922 he was charged with mail fraud and convicted in 1925. His sentence was commuted in 1927 and he was deported to Jamaica. Garvey died in London.

Following the expansionist war with Spain (1898-1901), the United States sought to direct the aspirations of recently acquired colonial indigenes in Puerto Rico, Cuba, the Philippines, and Hawaii by modifying the Industrial Education Model. This blurring of “Negro” and “Native Education” had begun a decade earlier at Lake Mohonk, New York (1890, 1891), where prominent white educators, led by former President Rutherford B. Hayes, met to discuss the “Negro Question.” In 1891 conferees agreed to promote state-supported primary education while leaving private philanthropy to promote Industrial Education and teacher training.<sup>12</sup> Migration, expansionism, and social engineering posed challenges for Teachers College, Columbia. If the college were to remain in the forefront of educational theory and practice, the educational ramifications of these new transnational trends would have to be accommodated.

With no international experience of her own, Mabel Carney was drawn to the comparative and international components of the Teachers College program. She acquired a wide and varied group of friends, including Africans J.E.K. Aggrey of the Gold Coast, already well known in missionary circles, and Kamba Simango of Southern Rhodesia and his wife Kathleen Easman, of Sierra Leone. Carney also became close with the group of white South African students drawn to the college by its various programs.<sup>13</sup> Among Carney’s friends were Ernest G. Malherbe and his wife Janie, and Charles T. Loram, a former inspector of Native Schools in Natal Province and an important member of the Union Government’s Native Affairs Commission.<sup>14</sup>

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12 Alfred H. (1828-1903) and Albert K. (1828-1912) Smiley were noted Quaker educators. In 1870 Albert H. Smiley purchased land surrounding Lake Mohonk, New York. His twin brother purchased adjoining acreage around Lake Minnewaska. Both built homes and mountain resorts on their properties. Albert, a trustee of Brown University, Bryn Mawr College, and the State Normal School at New Paltz, New York, was appointed to the Board of Indian Affairs (1879) by President Rutherford B. Hayes. In 1883 he hosted the first of a series of Lake Mohonk Indian Conferences at Lake Mohonk Lodge, attended by 300 participants. In 1890 and 1891 he hosted 200 participants at Lake Mohonk Lodge for three-day conferences on the Negro Question under the chairmanship of his old friend President Hayes. *Ibid.*, Watkins et al., *Race and Education*, 40-46; also see *Illustrated Redland* (Redlands, CA: Redlands Facts, Private Publisher, 1897), 50-51.

13 Britain would have no comparable institution until 1932 when the Carnegie Corporation would underwrite the University of London’s Institute of Education, and companion residence, London House. See Richard Glotzer, “Sir Fred Clarke: South Africa and Canada. Carnegie Philanthropy and the Evolution of Empire into Commonwealth,” *Education Research and Perspectives* 22, 1 (1995): 1-21; Killie Campbell African Library, University of Natal, Durban, South Africa, E.G. Malherbe Papers (hereafter EGM Papers), C.T. Loram/E.G. Malherbe Correspondence, Unaccessioned Files, undated manuscript 1936, “Teachers College and South Africa.”

14 Loram’s published dissertation became a standard work in Native Education circles. His advocacy of a hand-picked African elite, under white guidance, receiving advanced education was viewed as controversial. Focusing on basic skills, handicrafts, hygiene, and religion, and taught in the vernacular language, Africans would gradually advance toward “civilized standards” while maintaining ties to their traditional cultures. Loram’s

Carney met Loram in 1917. Through him she met the Welsh-born Thomas Jesse Jones, Director of Education for the Phelps-Stokes Fund. Both Jones and Loram were close to the wealthy and influential Anson Phelps-Stokes, whose interest, like that of other important philanthropists, was in applying emerging social science principles to social issues, particularly the Negro Question.<sup>15</sup> An ordained Presbyterian minister with a Columbia Ph.D. in sociology, Jones' specialization in "Southern Negro Education" lent itself to missionary work.<sup>16</sup> It was through these friends that Carney's image of Africa, strongly imbued with the concept of "the white man's burden," was formed.<sup>17</sup>

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interpretation of Industrial Education addressed white anxiety about African proletarianization – as observed in the United States. The larger reality was that the dynamics of African life were permeated by the impact of The Natives Land Act of 1913, which left 13 per cent of South Africa's land reserved for Africans. Overcrowding, and shortages of food, work, and housing, forced the migration of Africans to urban centres in search of work. This huge pool of right-less, low-wage workers did in fact shed many aspects of traditional culture and become an urban proletariat. See Maurice Evans, *Black and White in the Southern United States* (Longmans, Green: London, 1915); Charles T. Loram, *The Education of the South African Native* (London: Longmans Green, 1917); Solomon T. Plaatje, *Native Life in South Africa* (London: P.S. King & Son, 1916); R. Hunt Davis, "Charles T. Loram and an American Model for African Education in South Africa," *African Studies Review* 19 (1976): 87-99.

15 William H. Watkins, *The White Architects of Black Education* (New York: Teachers College Press, 2001), 81-93, 118-33.

16 In 1917 Jones' two-volume study, *Negro Education*, assessing the impact of northern philanthropy on Southern Negro Education, was published. Noting that educational progress had been made, Jones argued against redundancy and wasted resources, citing weak and poorly administered institutions and those worthy of closure. His recommendations were similar to those being made for white schools. But Jones also carried forward typological ideas of race in *Negro Education*, nurtured and systematized in his doctoral work under sociologist Franklin Giddings (1855-1931). These ideas, addressing unregulated emotion, faulty moral development, and need for control of African-Americans, appear in his earlier work on the widely modelled Hampton Institute Social Studies Curriculum. Jones' most effective critic was W.E.B. DuBois, who accused Jones of advocating a surrender of control of African-American education to the social norms and institutional control of white southerners. For contextualized discussions of Jones' work see Eric Anderson and Alfred A. Moss Jr., *Dangerous Donations* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1999), 191-218; Watkins et al., *Race and Education*, 44-50, and Watkins, *Architects of Black Education*, 98-116.

17 Aggrey met Jones in 1904 and also studied sociology under Franklin Giddings. As well, Giddings supervised the now notorious *Social and Mental Traits of the Negro* (1911), an overtly racist doctoral dissertation by Howard W. Odum, emphasizing the familiar themes of unregulated emotion, moral turpitude, and the need for social control. Odum became a progressive leader in North Carolina, as well as President of the American Sociological Association (1930). Columbia was also home to the Dunning School of Civil War Reconstruction History. William Archibald Dunning (1857-1922) supervised a series of influential dissertations supporting the claims of white southerners while identifying blacks as an unstable and destructive element in Southern society requiring control. See Edwin W. Smith, *Aggrey of Africa* (New York: Richard R. Smith, 1930), 67-80, 100-142.

As Carney's involvement with Negro Education deepened, an opportunity for travel emerged with the promise of a sabbatical for the spring of 1926.<sup>18</sup> Through Jones she had earlier made contact with J.H. Oldham of the International Missionary Council, and through Oldham, she was offered the opportunity to make an eleven-country visit under the joint auspices of the British Ministry of Education and the International Missionary Council.<sup>19</sup> Beginning in the Gold Coast Colony and ending in Egypt, Carney was to survey mission schools in the British colonies and the Union of South Africa. In all, Carney spent six months in Africa, publishing her observations as her *African Letters*.<sup>20</sup>

Carney's first visits to the Hartford's Kennedy School of Missions coincided with her growing interest in foreign travel.<sup>21</sup> She was

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18 In the fall of 1925 Carney introduced "Negro Education and Race Relations," which she estimated was "attended annually by 200 to 300 students including white, colored, native and foreign." In 1937 her course "The Education of Negroes in the United States" was made a full-year course. J.E. Russell Papers, untitled, undated letter, Folder 187; Carney Papers, Hartford Theological Seminary (hereafter Carney Papers, HTS), Box 28, Item 9358, "Announcement Special Course on the Education of Negroes," May 1937.

19 Her trip followed two African Phelps-Stokes Education Commissions (1922, 1925) chaired by Jones, with Aggrey as the sole African member, and a Colonial Office White Paper, *Education Policy in British Tropical Africa* (1925). She viewed British administrative policy as efficient and humanitarian, believing that racism, brutality, and greed were individual character faults, not inherent characteristics of the colonial system. Carney's travelling companion, Canadian Margaret Wrong, also influenced her views. Wrong, also on a six-month tour of Africa for the British Student Christian Movement, shared Carney's compassionate, humanitarian beliefs about race, as well as strong interests in literacy and religious education. Wrong was an associate of J.H. Oldham, and her Toronto upbringing, education (Somerville College, Oxford), and experience made her an adept interpreter of the British colonial system in Africa and its potential. See Clive Whitehead, "Education Policy in British Tropical Africa: The 1925 White Paper in Retrospect," *History of Education* 10, 3 (1981): 195-203; Ruth Compton Brouwer, "Margaret Wrong's Literacy Work and the 'Remaking of woman' in Africa, 1929-48," *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 23, 3 (1995): 427-52.

20 Mabel Carney, *African Letters* (New York: Private Printer, 1926), 10-22, in Carney file, Russell Papers. A copy of *African Letters* can also be found in the J.H. Oldham Papers, Rhodes House, Oxford University. E.G. Malherbe, now on the Faculty of Education at the University of Cape Town, arranged most of Carney's speaking arrangements in South Africa, as well as a meeting with Jan Smuts, the former Prime Minister and now leader of the parliamentary opposition, and a dinner party attended by fourteen of South Africa's twenty-six Teachers College graduates. For an overview of Malherbe's remarkable career see Ernest G. Malherbe, *Never a Dull Moment* (Cape Town: Howard Timmins, 1981).

21 After nine months on the faculty Carney was disavowing plans to spend a year in India. As her sabbatical approached (1925) she was more direct: "I should like exceedingly to visit China, India, or Africa, and to make further study of rural and village education among retarded peoples. With this background I could do a great deal more for our foreign students here." Carney's interest in India may have been inspired by J.H. Oldham's early years in India, as well as the political and missionary involvements of Universalist theologians John Haynes Holmes (1879-1964), minister of the Community Church of New York City, and Jabez Sunderland (1842-1936). Holmes advanced the belief that social involvement was intrinsic to religious practice. A pacifist during World War One, Holmes' 1921 sermon on Mohandas Gandhi is credited with bringing Gandhi's



introduced to the institution by women friends in the 1920s. Hartford's long history of educational programs and recognition as the first American seminary to admit women (1889) made Hartford a potentially attractive venue for Carney. Founded in 1833 by Congregationalist ministers, the Seminary had evolved to become incorporated as a single interdenominational university of religion – the Hartford Theological Seminary, in 1913.

Carney left her initial impressions of Missionary Education at Hartford unrecorded but her *African Letters* suggest strong reservations about missionary training generally. Her African experience, influenced by her frontier childhood, led her to revise her view that missionary practices were outdated and weak in practical education and emphasis on improved living standards.<sup>22</sup> Writing favourably of British missionary efforts and colonial policies, her highest praise was for American missionary societies and their emphasis on the practical arts.

On her return Carney placed increasing emphasis on the study of Negro, Native, and Missionary Education. She cultivated a professional friendship with her Columbia University colleague Franz Boas, who shared her interest in African cultures and concern with the wretched conditions of Harlem. She helped establish a Negro Education Club (1925), becoming friendly with many African-American intellectuals, academics and political leaders through the Club's Speakers Program, including W.E.B. DuBois and his wife Nina.<sup>23</sup> Carney's personal warmth, generosity, dedication to her work, and occasional outspokenness were qualities that commanded admiration and loyalty from colleagues and students – and the tolerance of administrators.

Over time, Carney's friendship with DuBois, Boas, and other progressives led to a unique fusion of experience, education, and personal beliefs – and adherence to some of the social conventions and prejudices of her times. From our twenty-first-century vantage point, her inconsistencies appear more contradictory than they may have to her contemporaries. She embraced Boas' concept of Cultural Relativism,

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work and philosophy before the American public. J.E. Russell Papers, Folder 184B, Carney to Russell, Folder 184B, 11 June, 1919, Carney to Russell, May, 1925; Spencer Lavan, *Unitarians and India* (New York: Beacon Press, 1977), 143-96; Robinson, *The Unitarians and the Universalists*, 133-41.

<sup>22</sup> For Liberia she offered this tortured analogy: "Substitute a Perseverance Island for Plymouth Rock, a blazing sun for icy New England snows, and warring black Africans from the interior for hostile Indians, and you have almost a counterpoint to early beginnings in America." For Carney, Liberia was a frontier society with black settlers (ex-slaves) contending with their own indigenes – Africans living in the interior. On both her visits to South African (1926, 1934) she reminded receptive audiences that they too had combatted savages on the frontier. *African Letters*, 5

<sup>23</sup> Nina Dubois was a self-made Midwesterner from Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Like Carney, she had a strong sense of social justice balanced against a fairly conventional social outlook. Manning Marable, *W.E. Dubois, Black Radical Democrat* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1986), 24-26.

which posited that all cultures have an internal logic, integrity, and structure, requiring understanding and respect on their own terms – a contested idea in colonialist circles.<sup>24</sup>

Cultural Relativism was an instrument for change as well as a statement of principle, as Bronislaw Malinowski suggested to the Rockefeller Foundation in 1924:

The old-fashioned missionary...knowing that savage superstition is of the devil...did more mischief than...realized, for religion in all societies is not only good and moral and elevating, but in each society it is specifically adapted to its need...A sympathetic acquaintance with the creed to be superseded is the first essential of the honest and enlightened missionary. Modern missionary societies have recognized it...There is a missionary school in the United States and it would be interesting to inquire into their teaching of Anthropology and their attitude toward that science.<sup>25</sup>

That School was the Kennedy School of Missions, alone in offering anthropology to missionaries at that time.<sup>26</sup>

Malinowski's advice suggests that "old-fashioned" missionaries and their new social science colleagues had a fundamental bond; neither credited indigenous peoples with the capacity to embrace Christianity in

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24 Cultural Relativism stood in opposition to Indirect Rule, under which traditional leaders in effect did the work of colonial governance administration. Such traditional social forms as reciprocal obligation, precedence, rank, kinship, gender, ethnicity, and political power were distorted by Indirect Rule. Moreover, colonial institutions were imposed for achieving status, wealth, and power in society. See George W. Stocking, "The Scientific Reaction Against Cultural Anthropology 1917-1920," in *Race, Culture and Evolution*, ed. G.W. Stocking (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1982); Frederick J. Lugard, *The Dual Mandate in British Tropical Africa*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed. (Hamden, Ct., 1965); also see William H. Rivers, *Report upon the present condition and future needs of the science of anthropology; presented to the Carnegie Institute of Washington* (Washington, D.C.: Gibson Brothers, 1913), 5-28, and esp. 9, 15-16.

25 Royal Institute of International Affairs Collection, Rhodes House, Oxford University, JHO, Folder 2, Box 2:6-7, Memorandum For the Rockefeller Foundation Written for Mr. [Edwin] Embree in March 1926, by Bronislaw Malinowski.

26 By the early 1920s the study of indigenous peoples had shifted from the historical to an interest in contemporary culture, grounded in the emerging social sciences. Social scientists at leading institutions were developing distinct disciplinary perspectives while sharing a common approach toward methodology and quantitative methods. In time many of the recognized distinctions about so-called primitive peoples would prove creations grounded in Euro centrism. For decades social constructions like *tribal identity* occupied a central place in missionary work and the bureaucracies governing indigenous peoples throughout the colonial world. See Robert Thornton, "Evolution, Salvation and History in the Rise of the Ethnographic Monograph in Southern Africa 1860-1920," *Social Dynamics* 6, 2 (1981): 14-23; Pat Hudson, "The origins and nature of quantitative thinking," *History by Numbers: An Introduction to Quantitative Approaches* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 26-50.

light of their own spiritual needs or on their own terms.<sup>27</sup> Indeed, attempts at integrating religious symbols, theology, and practices into existing belief systems were resisted rather than recognized as a form of sincere engagement. African Christians were persecuted and martyred in large numbers across Africa by traditional and competing religions. The ultimate blasphemy for African Christians was to posit that God was African.<sup>28</sup> If Carney's embrace of ideas like Cultural Relativism was imperfect, the pedagogy she crafted for her Hartford students presumed open dialogue between teacher and student rather than the conveyance of received knowledge.<sup>29</sup>

### The Hartford Theological Seminary

In January of 1928, after some discussion and correspondence with Hartford's Dean, Edward Capen, the faculty of the Kennedy School voted to have Mabel Carney offer a ten-lecture course, "Methods of Approach to Primitive Peoples," designed primarily for mission students preparing for assignments in Africa.<sup>30</sup> In 1929 her course became "Methods of Education in Foreign Lands," reflecting a broadening of subject matter. Originally offered in 5 double lecture periods, by 1932-33 "Methods of Education" comprised 10 double lecture periods. In an initial arrangement, the School covered Carney's travel expenses and provided a hundred-dollar honorarium. From the Seminary's perspective, Carney, with her numerous contacts and generous spirit, was a great find.<sup>31</sup>

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27 For examples of colonial and contemporary African Christian movements see Philip Jenkins, *The Next Christendom: The Rise of Global Christianity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 42-47; for accounts and photographic documentation of mass revivals, conversions, and healings crossing colour lines in Apartheid South Africa, see Julius Stadsklev, *William Branham: A Prophet Visits South Africa* (Jeffersonville, IN: William Branham Evangelistic Association, 1952), 71-154; Allie A. Dubb, *Community of the Saved* (Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press, 1976), 23-40, 75-136.

28 Jenkins, *The Next Christendom*, 42-53.

29 Carney introduced herself to Boas after her trip to Africa. While she viewed some Africans as amusing curiosities, she could be quite accepting, e.g. after the initial shock of finding a Christian sect that practiced nudity, she got on well with them, noting with humour their desire to acquire Smith-Corona typewriters. While some of Carney's wry observations are humorous there are also instances of racism and prejudice, the least flattering being her deep and visceral hostility to Islam. See James W. Fernandez and Mary Taylor Huber, eds., *Irony in Action: Anthropology, Practice and the Moral Imagination* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 1-37; J.E. Russell Papers, *African Letters*, 5-10.

30 Carney Papers, HTS, Box 28, Item 9188, HTS, Edward W. Capen (Dean, Hartford) to Carney, 1 February, 1928.

31 In 1931 Mabel Carney was named to the advisory board to the *Journal of Negro Education*, scheduled to begin publication in 1932. While hardly radical, Carney was a respected academician with wide-ranging contacts and a reputation for supporting racial justice at a time when few would accept African-American graduate students, support their extra-curricular activities, or treat African-American social and intellectual leaders as equals. She occupied unique ground and those around her knew it. Carney's

Carney offered students at the Kennedy School of Missions a wide range of experiences, at times relying on her network of contacts to arrange visits to rural schools and state social service agencies in New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut.<sup>32</sup> She was famous for her field trips to Harlem. Aside from the immediate needs of her students, Carney also examined the Kennedy Curriculum as a whole. Her earlier doubts about the preparation of missionaries and modern educational practice re-emerged now that she was actually training missionaries herself. She began to develop detailed syllabi for new courses on such subjects as "Village Education," which she shared with Dean Capen.<sup>33</sup> In typical Carney fashion she also prepared annotated reading lists for her classes, encouraging them to read in the areas of educational practice and theory.

Class sizes at Hartford were sometimes quite small and teaching was often tailored to the individual needs of students who came from a variety of educational backgrounds.<sup>34</sup> Thus Carney often walked her students through difficult aspects of their assigned readings. The Hartford environment was friendly and informal. There were many female students, and Carney, who had quietly promoted the academic and professional interests of women at Teachers College, Columbia, especially her African and African-American students, no doubt enjoyed this aspect of her teaching. The institutional commitment to religious liberalism, or the social application of religious values and the ideals of service, offered Carney a dimension of community difficult to achieve at the more competitive Teachers College. The School's instructional budget was precarious during the depression years and Carney was always anxious about her annual renewals – although she need not have been. From the beginning she enjoyed cordial relations with the Hartford staff and students, particularly Dean Capen and his wife, as one letter testified: "I am very sorry your work with us is closing. We had come to regard you as one of us here. The students enjoyed your work very much."<sup>35</sup>

While Carney was "deeply mortified" to have neglected issuing grades for her first course, over the years she monitored her students' progress to an unusual degree for a part-timer.

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involvement with the *JNE* dramatically broadened her range of contacts among African-American educators and intellectuals. Over time, contacts with Chas H. Thompson (the first editor of *JNE*), Ralph Bunche, Eric O. Williams, E. Franklin Frazier, and the *JNE* editorial staff and contributors broadened her exposure to new ideas and literature. Her association with *JNE* lasted until 1965. Archives, *Journal of Negro Education*, Howard University, Washington, D.C., Chas H. Thompson to Mabel Carney, 2 Dec. 1931, and Thompson to Carney, 9 April 1932.

32 Carney Papers, HTS, Notice of Field Trip, Box 28, Item 9218, 22 Nov. 1928.

33 Ibid., Box 28, Item 9486, Problems of Missionary Education, Outline for Dean Capen, 23 April 1928.

34 Ibid., Box 28, Item 9344, Capen to Carney, 27 Jan. 1937.

35 Ibid., Box 28, Item 9221, L.H. to Carney, 4 Dec. 1928.

Here are the grades for...*course 62*. If you note any cases which seem *inconsistent* in view of records made by the students in other courses, please let me know. I am a little doubtful about Miss Cabeen and also Miss Spencer. Have they made higher grades in other courses? Thomas was bright but a playboy and lazy. My best students are indicated by the A's of course.<sup>36</sup>

The interest Carney took in curricular matters reflects her concern that students would not be fully able to offer genuine education in the field. Literacy, hygiene, and basic crafts were worthwhile starting points in Native Education. Religious education, in and of itself, was inadequate. For Carney religious instruction was a means of setting direction for the exercise of growing secular competencies. She herself did not proselytize. Indeed, for a person drawn to a seminary setting, her religious expression was secular, and her Hartford correspondence offers no mention of religious experience.

Carney also took an interest in the institution itself. Early on she sought collaboration between Teachers College, Columbia, and the Kennedy School of Missions. Both Dr. R. J. Leonard, Director of the School of Education, and Dr. Paul Monroe, who were "considered primarily responsible for missionary interests and foreign students," expressed interest in the idea. (Monroe served on the Board of the American Baptist Foreign Missionary Society.) Teachers College was to develop a comprehensive plan for the project in 1929, with a professional educator to be hired with the title of Director.<sup>37</sup> Leonard, Monroe, and Capen disagreed about the appropriate centre for this work but Capen was quickly brought around to the notion of a joint appointee when he found that his ideal candidate could command a \$5000 salary and a budget for research and publication.<sup>38</sup> Some negotiation lay ahead to render the scheme workable. However, within a year the financial situation of both institutions altered dramatically. Paul Mort, the new Director of the School of Education, now thought the College unable to assume new financial burdens, and Dean Russell expressed doubts about proposed short courses.<sup>39</sup>

This was not Carney's first attempt to create an institutional structure for work she thought valuable. She had approached Dean Russell in 1925 about a "School of Rural Education." When Russell seemed less than enthused with the idea, she lectured him in a five-page letter most faculty members would have thought twice about before sending to a Dean.

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36 Ibid., Box 28, Items 9229 and 9440, Carney to Grace Taylor, 16 July 1929, Carney to Shwarz (Registrar's Office), 19 May 1941; italics in original.

37 Ibid., Box 28, Item 9201, Carney to Mrs. Thomas Donohugh, 13 April 1928.

38 Dr. W. J. McKee had done missionary work in Moga, India, and was now on the faculty of University of North Carolina. Ibid., Box 28, Item 9207, Carney to Capen, 10 May 1928.

39 Ibid., Box 28, Item 9223, Carney to Capen, 1 Dec. 1930.

Though Russell's response was testy, recognizing that Carney's enthusiasms occasionally got in the way of sounder judgements, he held no grudges.<sup>40</sup>

With the prospect of institutional collaboration closed off, Carney set about using her extensive network of associates to help expand and improve the quality of the educational courses at the Kennedy School of Missions. Here she was more successful. She brought in speakers, arranged tours, and began to demand a great deal more fieldwork from her Mission students. Having the bare bones of educational theory and practice was not enough; Carney wanted her students to develop some sophistication about the educational process and the cultural context in which it occurred. With this in mind, by late 1931 Carney was laying the groundwork for her friend, Charles Loram, to become involved in Hartford's educational work.<sup>41</sup> Due for a sabbatical in the fall of 1932, Carney wanted Loram as her replacement.<sup>42</sup>

Loram had immigrated to the United States in 1931, as Union Government hostility toward even limited African advancement grew in South Africa. His philanthropist patron, Anselm Phelps Stokes, secured a position at Yale for him.<sup>43</sup> Through her own activities Carney had inadvertently started a minor revolution in Loram's thinking. Always opposed to unregulated "European" education for Africans, Loram observed with chagrin as Carney took on a young Zulu woman, Sibusisiwe Makhanya, as a graduate student in 1929. She was no stranger to Loram for he had first helped her and Amelia Njongwana study in the American South, terminating their Phelps-Stokes support when they rejected the rudimentary Industrial Education offered at South Carolina's Penn School on St. Helena Island.<sup>44</sup> Njongwana transferred to the Schaffler Training School in Cleveland, Ohio, to study social work.

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40 J.E. Russell Papers, Folder 184B, Russell to Carney, 15 May 1923.

41 Carney Papers, HTS, Box 28, Items 9227 and 9230, Carney to Capen, and Carney to Capen, 23 Jan. 1932 and 25 Jan. 1932.

42 Carney toured Negro Schools in the South for her sabbatical. As she wrote Dean Capen, "I had a remarkable trip...seeing conditions of every type in both schools and rural life, many of which I scarcely thought possible for this day in American Society. All this will contribute to my background for the...course I give at Hartford." *Ibid.*, Box 28, Item 9242, Carney to Capen, Carney Papers, 31 Dec. 1932.

43 Yale's initial offer to Loram was \$10,000 a year plus \$1000 to purchase an annuity. Loram countered with \$13,500 and a plan for an Institute "for training leaders among people of retarded cultures." Anson Phelps-Stokes Papers, Sterling Memorial Library, Yale University, New Haven, CT., Loram to Phelps-Stokes, Box 75, Folder 1236, 3 Nov. 1930.

44 A decade after Makhanya's matriculation at Teachers College, Carney recommended Dr. Mason Olcott, an instructor at Hartford, for the principalship of the Penn School. She knew retirements at Penn were imminent and wrote the School on Olcott's behalf. Thus while she empathized with her African student's rejection of rudimentary Industrial Education in the deep South setting, she still saw a place for such education. Carney Papers, HTS, Box 28, Item 9413, Carney to Dean Malcolm Pitt, 8 Feb. 1940 [Pitt succeeded Capen].

Sibusisiwe Makhanya saved tuition money to attend Teachers College, Columbia, by cleaning bathrooms, and later, by making a speaking tour arranged by friends.<sup>45</sup> Makhanya was an unqualified success at Teachers College, Columbia.<sup>46</sup>

Soon Loram was bringing African students to Yale.<sup>47</sup> While Mabel Carney was cautious about including new or unconventional ideas in her work, her intellectual life was hardly a set piece. Loram was more settled in his views despite his recent interests in Native American and Polynesian peoples.<sup>48</sup> A man of substantial talent and experience, and a fluent Zulu speaker, Loram needed time to work through the intellectual and programmatic implications connected with his appointment as Yale's Sterling Professor of Race Relations. His rejection in South Africa and collapse of an established career, followed by the need to emigrate and the loss of his government pension, were traumatic for the fifty-year-old Loram.<sup>49</sup> Rather than planning a well-thought-out research agenda in a new environment, he sought new applications for ideas that were becoming discredited in the circles in which he wished to travel.<sup>50</sup> Domestic issues also loomed large for him. He was always pressed for income.<sup>51</sup>

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45 Davis, "Charles T Loram,," Sibusisiwe Mahanya Papers, Campbell Library, University of Natal, Durban, S.A., "Sibusisiwe Makhanya," Notes by Marguerite Malherbe from a biography dictated to Myrtle Trowbridge by Sibusisiwe Makhanya, File 4, KCM 14534, 1, November 1977; Carney Papers, HTS, Box 28, Item 9291, Loram to Carney, 22 Oct. 1934.

46 Carney's reputation had grown to the point where the Phelps-Stokes Fund was arranging interviews with her for its visitors as well as encouraging missionaries who could afford to stay in New York to take her courses. Kenneth J. King, *Pan-Africanism and Education* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971), 187.

47 Loram's African students included Selby Nogodo, Abner Nkosi, Rueben Caluza, Eva Mahuma-Moroka and Z.K. Mathews and Arthur Lazarus. His white South African students included Lavinia Scott, Ray Philips, and Oscar E. Emanuelson. Caluza and Mahuma-Moroka earned Teachers College, Columbia, degrees.

48 Cf. Ray E. Phillips, foreword by Charles T. Loram, *The Bantu are coming: phases of South Africa's race problem* (London: Student Christian Movement Press, 1930); Charles T. Loram, ed., *The North American Indian Today* (Toronto: T.F. McIlwraith, 1939); Charles T. Loram and Felix M. Keesing, eds., *Education in Pacific Countries* (Shanghai: Kelly and Walsh, Limited, 1937).

49 EGM Papers, Malherbe-Loram Correspondence 1926-1940, Charles T. Loram, "Circular Letter to My Friends (Confidential)," Unaccessioned File, 30 June 1931, 1-3.

50 Loram served on the Board of Directors of the Phelps-Stokes Fund-sponsored *Encyclopedia of the Negro* Project (1932-1937) with leading African-American intellectuals and academicians. It is difficult to believe Loram's views would have gained much credence with this group. Anselm Phelps-Stokes, Chairman of the Board, initially excluded W.E.B. DuBois and Alain Locke from the project. This controversy led to a second organizational meeting at which DuBois was elected Editor in Chief of the project. W.E.B. DuBois, ed., *Encyclopedia of the Negro* (New York: Phelps-Stokes Fund, 1946).

51 The Lorams lived a comfortable lifestyle in New Haven. Attentive, progressive parents, their children financed a large portion of their expensive educations through scholarships aided by family connections. Loram had been a classmate of Swarthmore's President, at Kings College, Oxford. Margaret (Swarthmore and Columbia), Joan (Bryn

Carney had long insisted that missionary education would be more effective as a collaborative venture but it was Loram, intent on achieving some success in the United States, who formally suggested to her that Teachers College, Yale, and Cornell Universities develop a collaborative framework for “the development through education of non-western peoples.”<sup>52</sup> Cornell, through Loram’s former student, economist Theodore Eaton, would offer agricultural economics; Yale would offer the social, governmental, and religious aspects of cultural contacts and race relations; and Teachers College, Columbia, would be responsible for educational theory and practice.<sup>53</sup>

Significantly, Loram left out the Kennedy School of Missions, reflecting his own preconceptions and experiences with missionaries. In the end it was Loram who was left out. Edward Capen was not greatly impressed by him, noting that he lacked the personal qualities (modesty among them) that made Carney such an asset. He did not serve as her sabbatical replacement although the two continued to collaborate across institutions. While not a part of the inner circle of South African liberals, part of Carney’s bond to Loram was based on her deep interest in South Africa, described in her *African Letters* as “the *second best* country in the world.”<sup>54</sup>

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Mawr, Swarthmore and Teachers College, Columbia), were already in the United States at the time of the family’s decision to immigrate. Ian Loram attended Choate Preparatory School and later Yale College. Their youngest children, Cynthia and Mary, attended the New Haven Public Schools. Joan’s husband, Robert, required an extensive period of recuperation after surgery, supported by the Lorams. Author interviews, Dr. Frank Cyr (1900-1995), Stamford, New York, August, 1991, May 1992. Dr. Cyr taught at Teachers College between 1934 and 1965 and knew Loram and Carney. Cyr is best remembered as the father of the yellow school bus. Author Interviews, Leonard Doob (1909-2000), New Haven, Connecticut, 19-20 April 1991. Doob, a distinguished social psychologist specializing in propaganda studies and conflict resolution, taught psychology at Yale (1934-1977) and knew Loram.

52 Carney and Loram collaborated regularly in the 1930s. The two brought their student groups together for lectures and luncheons and they occasionally covered each other’s classes. When Loram went to Southern Rhodesia for a Conference, Carney looked after his African students. Carney Papers, HTS, Box 28, Items 9389 and 9404, “Program, Department of Race Relations (Yale), Teachers College-Yale Conference on Education in the West Indies” (c. 1937), and “Visit to Yale University,” announcement of a visit by Hartford and Columbia students, 13 May 1939.

53 Ibid., Box 28, Item 9271, Notice “New Course for Spring Session” (1933-34).

54 Ibid., Box 28, Item 9273, Carney to Taylor, 13 April 1934; *African Letters*, 19, italics in the original. Carney’s activities at the Kennedy School sometimes overlapped with her work at Teachers College. On one occasion she arranged for Nettie Leisure, an advanced student at Teachers College (with African experience), to lecture at Hartford. For the spring of 1934 Carney invited Kennedy students to attend her new Teacher College course, “The Education of Negroes in the United States.” In addition to the usual speakers, Carney would offer “One or more excursions into Harlem...for purposes of visiting schools and social service centres.” For adventurous students she arranged visits to observe Southern Negro Education at first hand.



In 1934 Carney was invited back to South Africa to participate in an international education conference sponsored by the South African branch of the London-based New Education Fellowship. With an offer from Carnegie Corporation to cover her expenses (her colleagues John Dewey and Harold Rugg would be similarly supported), Carney first checked with Dean Capen, for “accepting the invitation means losing my summer school salary, and I shall not be able to make this sacrifice unless my extra work and salary at Hartford are still available.”<sup>55</sup> She need not have worried. Although the School of Missions experienced a 15 per cent drop in enrolments during the depression years, Dean Capen retained Carney even in the bleakest of times. Since the School permitted students to audit courses when they could not afford tuition, classes always had students. Carney’s involvement had increased to the point where she was being paid \$500 a year for teaching. (To Capen’s astonishment, when train fares to Hartford were reduced, Carney offered to return a portion of her salary).<sup>56</sup>

Mabel Carney’s second visit to South Africa was a resounding success.<sup>57</sup> She headed the popular Rural Education section of the Conference and made the only presentation offered jointly with an African, Eva Mahuma, a former Yale and Teachers College student. She created a stir when Sibusisiwe Makhanya came to fetch her at her hotel driving an automobile. Carney in turn was energized by exposure to new people and ideas. She saw that educators and colonial governments were recognizing the increasing complexities of Rural and Native Education, although the latter offered few outlets for its expression. Carney set about expanding her course at the Kennedy School of Missions because the school offered “so little in the practical phases of elementary and secondary education.” New outlines, handouts, “a revised book list and a collection set of photographs,” and the requirement that students observe “elementary and secondary schools, teacher-training centres, club work, agricultural extension, adult education and health agencies” were all part of the changes she brought about.<sup>58</sup>

Carney, ever observant, had noted how her male colleagues, particularly those with Carnegie ties, regularly integrated foreign travel into their academic work. In 1935 Carney led a summer field course to Mexico organized by Teachers College’s International Institute. Developed in co-operation with Rafael Ramirez, the Federal Republic’s Secretary of Education, the field course was to run five weeks. The first two weeks focused on cultural education followed by two weeks of visits to rural schools, cultural missions, and normal schools. The final week

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55 Carney Papers, HTS, Box 28, Item 9263, Carney to Capen, 6 Oct. 1933.

56 Ibid., Box 28, Item 9362, Carney to Capen, 15 May 1937.

57 The conference proceedings were published as E. G. Malherbe, ed., *Education in a Changing Society* (Cape Town: Juta and Company, 1937).

58 Carney Papers, HTS, Box 29, Item 9289, Carney to Capen, 14 Sept. 1934.

was devoted to understanding new educational programs in a cultural context. "Primitive Cultures," as exemplified by Mexico's large Indian population, of course attracted Carney.<sup>59</sup> For her the superstitious nature of such cultures could be modified only through education and the infusion of civilized standards.

The Rural Education Tour to Mexico attracted 104 students.<sup>60</sup> Offered through the Summer Sessions Office at Columbia, Carney sought to attract a racially integrated student body of students from Hartford, Teachers College, and elsewhere. As she wrote Jackson Davis of the General Education Board:

We are planning to take both Negro and White visitors on this tour. Do you see any objections to this? The only southerners we especially care to enlist are the state [co-operative extension] agents, and surely they will not object to a mixed party provided the Negroes rather group themselves together for some things as I am sure they would do.<sup>61</sup>

In this neutral territory African-Americans were to be the observers rather than the observed. By following racial protocols Carney brought a large integrated group together without incident.

In the summer of 1936 Carney was one of the sponsors of a tour of the Co-operative Movement in Nova Scotia.<sup>62</sup> Participants came from across the Canadian provinces and United States to observe how farmers established and operated agricultural co-operatives and credit unions in Nova Scotia and Cape Breton Island. The subtext of this tour was that new ground was being broken in co-operation between Catholics and Protestants as well as in the area of politically acceptable co-operative democracy.

Carney supervised the affairs of the group coming from New York. Ninety-one people registered for this initial Co-operative Conference Tour. Participants heard lectures from prominent experts for the first three days and spent the remaining time touring co-operative ventures in twenty-three locations. The funding of the tour itself was "run on

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59 For a "racial defence" of Mexicans written during the hey-day of the eugenics movement see Jose Casauranc, "Public Education in Mexico," *Teachers College Record* 27, 10 (1926): 865-72.

60 Carney Papers, HTS, Box 28, Item 9329, Carney to Capen, 23 Dec. 1935.

61 Ibid., Box 28, Item 9293, Carney to Davis, 25 Oct. 1934.

62 Carney's interest in Nova Scotia is contextualized in Ernest Stabler, "James Tompkins and Moses Coady: The Antigonish Movement in Nova Scotia," in Ernest Stabler, *Founders: Innovators in Education 1830-1980* (Edmonton, University of Alberta Press, 1987), 141-82.

cooperative principles and the balance...after all the bills are paid,...returned pro rata to the members of the party.”<sup>63</sup>

Anticipating three hundred registrants for the following year, the tour organizers divided registrants into two sections, the second coinciding with the end of Columbia’s 1937 summer session. In addition to Carney, the tour leaders included a Catholic priest, several Protestant ministers, and the Assistant Secretary of the Cooperative League of the U.S.A. Again Carney brought Hartford students. In Nova Scotia Carney was in her element. Her Universalism and moderate political views were well suited to contemporary concerns with left- and right-wing authoritarianism:

...advanced adult education...study groups, unity of purpose between Catholic and Protestant...changed lives with new hope and vision...the development of Cooperative Democracy in place of extreme socialistic or communistic tendencies, the relationship of the church to the...cooperative movement in Nova Scotia make a unique combination of facts to study.<sup>64</sup>

These racially integrated tours, undertaken as a joint venture between the Cooperative League of the U.S.A. and the Extension Department of St. Francis Xavier University, involved a lot of work, coming as they did directly after summer teaching. But for Carney these excursions provided new international experiences and were probably as close as she came to a real vacation. During the 1930s she supported unemployed relatives, paid their medical bills, and made informal loans and grants to students at Teachers College and the Kennedy School of Missions. For field trips she sometimes paid her students’ carfare and fees. “I arranged with my class last Friday...and all members will go to Yale for a meeting with Dr. Loram...I am paying the carfare for my students, but this does not hold for those outside my class.”<sup>65</sup> Despite her own slim resources she believed that students should not be deprived of valuable educational experiences for want of a few dollars. The educational tours of Nova Scotia’s Cooperative Movement accrued her no lasting financial benefits.

In the fall of 1937 Carney turned the good press of her Canadian experiences into a proposal for a summer Rural Education field course for 1938 in South Africa. Her colleague Paul Mort had successfully conducted research in the Union a few years before and Carney herself had a steady stream of South Africans in her courses.<sup>66</sup> The idea initially

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63 Carney Papers, HTS, Box 28, Item 9481, Program Notice, “The Second Annual Cooperative Conference -Tour Nova Scotia,” undated.

64 Ibid.

65 Ibid., Box 28, Item 9381, Carney to G.S. Taylor, 27 April 1938.

66 Richard Glotzer, “The Influence of Carnegie Corporation and Teachers College, Columbia, in the Interwar Dominions: Making the Case for Decentralized Education,” *Historical Studies in Education* 12, 1-2 (2000): 93-110.

received favourable review but in the end Teachers College was hesitant to fund such a venture, aware no doubt that Carnegie Corporation was anxious about its own South African program.<sup>67</sup> Carney tried again for 1939 but her proposal received a cooler reception, again reflecting the College's financial state, a deteriorating international situation, and growing uncertainties about South Africa's domestic politics. In the few years since she had last visited South Africa, the political landscape had changed dramatically. In the 1930s even the Malherbes toyed with following Loram's example and emigrating.<sup>68</sup>

### **Shifting Ground: The Ambivalence of Belief and Practice**

In the spring of 1940 fifty-nine-year-old Charles Loram died of a heart attack in Ithaca, New York, as he prepared to teach summer school at Cornell. With his death and the retrenchments at Teachers College, Carney advised Malcolm Pitt, the Kennedy School's new Dean, that Hartford should now strive to become the pre-eminent centre for missionary training in the United States. Carney urged the inclusion of still more secular work in education since most prospective missionaries were graduates of liberal arts colleges, "utterly innocent" of professional training in education.

Lack of such preparation...means...they [missionaries] are now going...to foreign fields and competing...with professionally trained teachers and administrators in government schools, or worse still, with young nationals directing indigenous schools, who have recently returned from America with Master's and Doctor's degrees in professional education...from centres such as Teachers College, the University of Chicago, and elsewhere....[H]ow can your graduates...uphold the reputation of missionaries abroad as professional educators?<sup>69</sup>

Carney's letter is curious. Religious and cultural conversion was a goal of missionaries, but successful mission work carried the danger that enlightened converts might become competitors, capable of "subverting" the educational process. Premature nationalism, cultural assertiveness, or flirtation with foreign ideologies might bring unwanted results. One suspects that for Carney the danger she feared most keenly for "emerging peoples" was a retreat into an immature materialism, contemptuous of "true western standards," including those of social justice. She struggled

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67 Carney Papers, HTS, Box 28, Item 9469, Carney to Pitt, 25 May 1942.

68 EGM Papers, Malherbe to Loram, undated File 422/1.

69 Carney Papers, HTS, Box 28, Item 9489, "Methods of Education in Foreign Lands - Village Schools," course outline, 1941-42.

with the notion that religious feeling, moral training, and education might alter consciousness and self-concept, leading to the desire for self-actualization through independence. Yet in her thinking “Natives” had evolved to become “Nationals.”

Carney’s course syllabi and handouts suggest that she linked economic development to social justice and improved quality of life. Implicit, however, is the belief that appropriate leadership was the driving force behind achieving such changes.<sup>70</sup> While Carney was pleased to have native students succeed in their studies, the growing pressures for young nationals to assume places of real authority, even within colonial structures, as in India, gave her pause. In recognizing “the international and interracial character of the student body of Teachers College, [and] its close proximity to the great Negro laboratory of Harlem,” Carney alluded to the ends of education in the larger world but she remained ambivalent about embracing them.<sup>71</sup>

Carney’s views reflected the gradual pace of her evolution in thinking about indigenous education that began in the late 1920s. Gradually she recognized the bankruptcy of paternalistically inspired Negro Education and its alliance with repressive political and economic institutions, particularly in the American South; this was education for subservience, not advancement. Equally important, Carney also learned of the racially inspired indignities and humiliations that her students of colour suffered on a daily basis, including the discounting of their professional expertise by contemptuous whites.<sup>72</sup> Her contacts with African students during the 1930s encouraged her to struggle toward a deeper understanding of African peoples and cultures at a time in her life when she was most receptive to personal growth. Although always more attuned to the indignities suffered by individuals, the pervasiveness of the racial discrimination visited on her students in New York and Hartford gradually led Carney to think in terms of broader categories of injustice, and she became an outspoken critic of what she perceived to be the inaction of Columbia University about poverty and crime in Harlem.<sup>73</sup>

When several southern white students sought to have an African-American woman removed from a residence hall at Columbia, Carney successfully fought this attempt at discrimination and the Dean that supported their demand.<sup>74</sup> In cultivating her Columbia colleague Franz Boas, Carney found a means of broadening her own education while

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70 Ibid., Box 28, Items 9452, 9254, and 9455, “Confidential Statement for Personal Friends,” Open letter by Mabel Carney, Carney to Pitt, Pitt to Carney, 1 Feb., 5 and 7 March 1942.

71 Ibid., Box 28, Item 9358, Announcement, Special Course on the Education of Negroes, May 1937.

72 See John Sekora, “Murder Relentless and Impassive: The American Academic Community and the Negro College,” *Soundings* 51 (1968): 237-71.

73 Carney Papers, HTS, Box 28, Item 9444, “Open Letter to Faculty and Students of Teachers College,” 19 Nov. 1941.

74 Cyr interviews.

securing dignified and professionally relevant employment for her African and African-American students, as language translators, tutors, and cultural informants.<sup>75</sup> If some issues remained difficult for her, it must be remembered that only fifteen years had passed since her first real exposure to African-American and African cultures. Her entry into higher education had been predicated on her training and expertise in Rural Education.

In early 1942 Carney announced plans for retirement from Hartford and Teachers College, Columbia, in part due to a progressive loss of hearing. She took an active role in selecting her replacement at Hartford.

Dr. Barstow...presented the idea of having Dr. Lew of China give my course next year. At first...this seemed a rather good idea, but...I wonder whether it would really be wise to have this particular course given by a National rather than an American. I heartily agree with President Barstow...Dr. Lew is a very able man, and...it would be well for Hartford to employ one or more National instructors.... On the other hand, Foreign representatives seem far better qualified for courses on the *culture of their own lands* than to give a general course on the principles of education in which American practice is so far ahead of most foreign practice.<sup>76</sup>

Dr. Lew was very able but apparently not able enough. President Barstow's memorandum to the Dean reveals his astonishment: "Probably this ought to be looked into. Do I understand that she rules Lew out?"<sup>77</sup> The answer was yes.

Carney subsequently advanced the names of three whites with missionary experience, pressing most strongly for a woman candidate, Dr. Ruth McMurray, a former faculty member of Teachers College's International Institute. Considering McMurray's background, Carney's objections to Dr. Lew are illustrative of her continuing ambivalence about culture, race, and power. "Miss McMurray's background is chiefly European and South American...more with government agencies than

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<sup>75</sup> Boas and Carney both worked with noted missionary Albert D. Helser, who with H. Stover Kulp, organized the first Church of the Brethren mission station in Northeastern Nigeria. The mission was noted for its interest in education and health care as much as evangelism. Cf. Albert D. Helser, foreword by Franz Boas, *African Stories* (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1930), and Albert D. Helser, foreword by Mabel Carney, *Education of Primitive People: A Presentation of the Folklore of the Bura Animists with a Meaningful Experience Curriculum* (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1934). The second volume, Helser's M.A. thesis from Teachers College, Columbia, is still in use. See <http://www.msu.edu/user/hamza/BuraFolktales.htm>.

<sup>76</sup> Carney Papers, HTS, Box 28, Item 9456, Carney to Pitt (18 March 1942), italics in original.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., Box 28, Item 9458, Barstow to Pitt, 30 March 30, 1942.

missions. But she is soundly prepared in Education.”<sup>78</sup> McMurray was subsequently hired and Dr. Lew left to teach about his own culture.

Mabel Carney retired from Hartford and Teachers College, Columbia, in 1942. The College’s continuing budgetary crises, now exacerbated by the war, required retrenchments. Carney, having been at half-time status for several years, was one of three to be let go. Her service to the College was noted by the unusual retirement package provided by the trustees, which gave her retirement benefits of a person leaving university service at age 65 (she was 57), although in time this would prove inadequate.<sup>79</sup> Her savings drained by the Depression and the informal financial help she had provided, Carney would not simply be taking care of herself but also providing for the children of a widowed sister. Carney’s was to be an active retirement.

In 1942 Howard University awarded Carney an honorary doctorate. In the same year the Negro Alumni Club of Teachers College, Columbia, presented her with a grant enabling her to produce a bimonthly newsletter entitled *Rural Education and Race Relations*. These unusual honours suggest that whatever contradictions Mabel Carney may have had, her efforts were recognized and appreciated by those benefiting from her advocacy. In time Carney would write on school desegregation cases, summer workshops, reviews of important books and articles, as well as the activities of individual colleagues. In 1943 Carney spent the first of two summers conducting education workshops at Hampton Institute and the following two summers conducting Race Relations Institutes at Fisk. From 1947 to 1950 she ran Rural Education workshops at Southern Illinois University near her retirement home in Marseilles, Illinois, and was honoured in 1949, at Tuskegee, during the celebration of the fortieth anniversary of the founding of the Jeannes’ Schools.<sup>80</sup> During her active retirement Carney maintained contact with former students and colleagues through correspondence and an occasional open letter, although she did not travel overseas again. Mabel Carney died in Estes Park, Colorado, in 1969 at the age of 84.

MABEL CARNEY left only hints about the nature of her religious beliefs or how she had come to them. She left no direct appraisals of colleagues or reflections on her activities or beliefs, obscuring a focused assessment of her contribution to Missionary Education. In her maturity she seemed quite comfortable and in step with the communitarian, educational, and social gospels of Universalism. As she told her Hartford colleagues,

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78 Ibid., Box 28, Item 9457, 21 March 1942.

79 W.F. Russell Papers, Folder RGG-No. 1, Carney to Hungate (Controller, TC), 5 Jan. 1942.

80 Anna T. Jeannes was a wealthy Quaker who donated large sums to the establishment of schools in the American South emphasizing the practical arts and home management.

“Any little good I may have done among the members of your group has been repaid manifold in pleasure and growth on my part.”<sup>81</sup> Hers was a religious expression grounded in practice, with individual growth a part of this practice.

As an educational innovator, Mabel Carney crafted a broad array of experiential learning activities to supplement required readings and discussion of texts. Her students were in many instances exposed to a new world both directly and vicariously through her travels.<sup>82</sup> At one point, half of her Hartford class went on tours of the rural South. One Hartford student, Paul Rupel, with an extensive educational background, ranked her with Stanford’s Ellwood P. Cubberley and Lewis Termin in excellence as a teacher.

Mabel Carney was one of a growing number of scholars who broadened the focus of Missionary Education by providing instruction in secular academic subjects. If Hartford’s history of educational programs made the Kennedy School of Missions amenable to a more socially aware and educationally sound curriculum, innovators like Carney were still required to bring the process along. Mabel Carney’s contributions to Missionary Education also reflect the struggles of early-twentieth-century Protestant seminaries to achieve a balance between nineteenth-century fundamentalist doctrines and the establishment of religious liberalism that emerged after the American Civil War.<sup>83</sup>

Early-twentieth-century religious liberalism served as an umbrella for those seeking a revitalized comprehension of salvation and social responsibility in an emerging modernist society. Carney’s *Country Life and the Country School* emphasized the problems of “the socially determined individual,” one whose life chances are heavily weighted by their place in society.<sup>84</sup> Although concerned with rural life, Carney’s thinking parallels that of such contemporaries as Jane Addams in her “Women’s Conscience and Social Amelioration” and *Democracy and Social Ethics*, and theologian John Haynes Holmes in his *The*

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81 Carney Papers, HTS, Box 29 Item 9518, Minute on the Retirement of Professor Mabel Carney.

82 In the mid-1920s when Mabel Carney first visited Africa, the founding of African Studies Association (1957) was thirty years in the future. Her 1926 first visit to Africa was a quarter-century in advance of Carnegie Corporation’s sponsored trips to Africa and the Corporation’s attempt to interest senior scholars like social psychologist Leonard Doob in Africa as an academic focus: Doob interviews.

83 Influenced by the emergence of Darwin’s theory of evolution, changes in secular education, new social freedoms, and a blending of religiously inspired civic responsibility, modern business interests and corporate business structures, old-line Protestant institutions like Yale’s Divinity Department and Harvard’s Divinity School moved away from fundamentalism. See Peter D. Hall, “Moving Targets: Evangelicalism and the Transformation of American Economic Life, 1870-1920,” in *More Money, More Ministry: Evangelicals and Finance in Modern America*, ed. Larry Eskridge and Mark A. Noll (Grand Rapids MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2000), 141-79.

84 Robinson, *The Unitarians and the Universalists*, 135-38.



*Revolutionary Function of the Modern Church*.<sup>85</sup> What she brought to Hartford at mid-life was her commitment to education as a social, ethical, and sometimes spiritual process.

Hartford's ordination of women and inclusion of secular education clearly placed it in the liberal Protestant camp along with Harvard, which early on (1816) embraced an ecumenical outlook, and Yale (Congregationalist), which moved toward liberalism through accommodation. Hartford's Presbyterian neighbour, the Princeton Theological Seminary, experienced prolonged conflicts between fundamentalism and liberalism in the 1920s and 1930s. A 1932 Rockefeller-funded study, *Re-thinking Missions*, intended for all Protestant missionary societies, suggested that the strength of Christianity was found less in adherence to doctrines or special evangelistic claims than in the universalism of the truths it shared with other religions. Christians were to be part of an ecumenical search for religious truth.<sup>86</sup> This seemingly radical conclusion, disturbing to some of the original supporters of the study and fundamentalists alike, led to a series of public discussions, a formal response, *Modernism and the Board of Foreign Missions*, and the formation of a (short-lived) Independent Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions committed to strict doctrine – reflecting conservative mistrust of missionaries as liberals.<sup>87</sup> It was the secular training and liberal outlook advanced by scholars like Carney that fuelled their suspicions.<sup>88</sup> The growing practicality and secularity of missionary

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85 Jane Addams, "Women's Conscience and Social Amelioration," in *The Social Application of Religion*, Merrick Lectures (Cincinnati: Jennings and Graham, 1908); Jane Addams, *Democracy and Social Ethics* (New York: MacMillan, 1911); and John Haynes Holmes, *The Revolutionary Function of the Modern Church* (New York: Putnam, 1912).

86 William E. Hocking, ed., *Re-thinking missions; a layman's inquiry after one hundred years by the commission of appraisal* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1932); Bradley Longfield, "For Church and Country: The Fundamentalist-Modernist Conflict in the Presbyterian Church," *Journal of Presbyterian History* 78, 1 (2000): 35-50; Bradley Longfield, *The Presbyterian Controversy: Fundamentalists, Modernists and Moderates* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991).

87 J. Gresham Machen, *Modernism and the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the USA* (Philadelphia: Private Publisher, 1933); Longfield, "For Church and Country," 45-50.

88 One of the charges made in *Modernism* was that the Foreign Board's list of recommended readings for missionary candidates deviated from historical Christianity. Examples of such material included Pearl S. Buck, "The Laymen's Mission Report," *The Christian Century* 49 (1932): 1434 and "Is there a Case for Foreign Missions?" *Harpers Magazine*, Jan. 1933, 14 and 150; J. H. Oldham, *The Devotional Diary* (London: SCM Press, 1924); D.J. Fleming, *The Marks of a World Christian* (New York: Association Press, 1919); and Harry Emerson Fosdick, *The Meaning of Faith* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1917). Carney's reading list for her course "Methods of Education in Foreign Lands" (1934) included works by Oldham, Fleming, and Buck, as well as Hocking's *Rethinking Missions* (1932). Carney Papers, HTS, Box 29, Item 9303, Course 62 – "Methods of Education in Foreign Lands."

work in the colonial world helped Christianity to take on an independent life, with its own strengths and problems, as colonialism receded.<sup>89</sup>

As Mabel Carney matured intellectually, her Christian ideals shifted from the moral responsibility of developed peoples for aid to “Retarded Peoples,” to a greater emphasis on the potentialities of all peoples, and to the injustices of poverty and exploitation. Her articles in her *Rural Education and Race Relations* newsletters are evidence of her continuing evolution in thinking. Her categories of social justice, broader than many of her contemporaries, continued to grow.

Carney’s passing in 1969, like J.H. Oldham’s in the same year, marked symbolically the end of a generation that had pursued partnerships between missionary organizations and colonial governments as a means of securing the development of indigenous peoples. Their passing coincided with the late twilight of colonialism and the demands of formerly colonized peoples to secure their own futures. Carney’s ability to reach beyond her early beliefs and commitments, to more egalitarian concepts of the role of education in achieving social justice, is part of what makes her career worthy of examination.

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89 Jenkins, *The Next Christendom*, 57-64, 192-202.