

**Peterson Fellowship
Final Report
Submitted by Candace Ward**

With the generous support of a Linda H. Peterson Fellowship for the 2023/24 year, I was able to devote myself to writing full time on my current book project, *The Caribbean Cosmopolis: Pan-Caribbean Identities and Nineteenth-Century Colonial Print Culture*. Because I was awarded teaching release for Spring 2024 after submitting my application, I adjusted my originally proposed timeline to divide the grant period into two phases: two months in Summer 2023 and another two months in Spring 2024. Initially, I began work on those book chapters specified in my application: “A Pull All Together”: The Rise of a Free Black Pan-Caribbean Press” and “Printing the Cosmopolis: The Circulation of Pan-Caribbean Identities.”

As I began revising “A Pull All Together,” I focused primarily on Samuel Prescod’s Barbados newspaper, *The Liberal*. Re-reading his editorial columns, “Truth and Justice,” it became clear that the immediate postEmancipation period, specifically the Apprenticeship period, highlighted for Caribbean colonial subjects questions of mobility. For Prescod, this mobility was of several kinds: forced evictions of Barbadian laborers from their homes through the machinations of a planter class determined to control the island’s labor market and inflict punitive measures against workers who tried to assert themselves as independent wage laborers; the importation of laborers—individuals often coerced or misled—into Barbados from other British colonies, particularly from India; and the emigration of Barbadian workers to other colonies in the Anglophone Caribbean. The latter type of mobility engaged Prescod’s editorial attention because of the opportunities it afforded Barbadian laborers to escape the island’s poor working conditions. The Barbados House of Assembly, in contrast, worked legislatively to prevent emigration and curtail the activities of recruiting agents from other Anglophone colonies

like British Guiana, whose efforts threatened (despite attempts to bring in nonBarbadian laborers) to decrease the labor pool and thus planters' ability to keep wages depressed.

As I continued thinking through the implications of Prescod's editorials and his understanding of the global issues reflected in them, the question of emigration began to take on significance in ways I did not anticipate. In fact, during the grant period I wrote and presented a paper at RSVP's 2024 conference that tied this question to a novel serialized in a Jamaican newspaper in 1911, but composed by a white Jamaican living in Canada in the mid-nineteenth-century, soon after the US Fugitive Slave Act became law in 1850. The novel itself is set in preEmancipation Jamaica, but its author, Cyrus Francis Perkins, intended it as a "blow" against US slavery, thereby contributing to the North American abolitionist movement. In my conference paper, I put Perkins' novel in conversation with an abolitionist newspaper produced in Canada, established by African American activist Mary Ann Shadd. Shadd, born into a family of free African Americans in the slave state of Delaware, had herself emigrated to Ontario because of the dangers to free Black people in the US after the Fugitive Act went into effect. In addition to her work on the *Provincial Freeman*, Shadd was a staunch advocate of emigration for African Americans in the antebellum period, both to Canada and to the Anglophone Caribbean. What I found most exciting about writing the paper was the way it helped me articulate how panCaribbean identities were shaped by multiple levels of diasporic movement. Very often, I found, such movement pitted ideas of national identity or colonial subjecthood against the need for individuals to protect themselves by severing ties to the countries of their birth or forcibly relocated to as part of the system of Atlantic slavery. This material is now incorporated into my "A Pull All Together" chapter.

Work on the second chapter, “Printing the Cosmopolis,” took a similarly exciting turn during the grant period. On a trip to Barcelona, I (quite literally) stumbled into the city archives, Arxiu Historic de la Ciutat de Barcelona. Although I was aware of some Spanish antislavery activity targeting the system in Cuba, I was unaware of the Barcelona connections to both pro- and anti-slavery sentiment. Supporters of slavery included the *indianos*—the name given to those who had emigrated from Catalan to Spain’s American colonies like Cuba and Puerto Rico, gained huge fortunes from sugar and slavery, and returned to Barcelona to spend their wealth. An initial review of secondary sources in the Arxiu led me to explore the printing activities of Antonio Bergnes de las Casas, whose anti-slavery work was shaped by his relationship with British abolitionists like George William Alexander and Quaker Benjamin Wiffen. In 1841, Bergnes translated and printed Richard Madden’s *Address on Slavery in Cuba* for Spanish readers; in 1853, he translated Richard Hildreth’s *Memoirs of Archy Moore; or, the White Slave (El Campaño del Tío Tom. El Escalvo Blanco)*, the fictional autobiography of a light-skinned slave in the US South, originally published in Boston in 1837. These works clearly signaled Bergnes’s anti-slavery sympathies, as did a number of essays he wrote for his periodical, *El museo de las familias*.

The Bergnes material—as well as the secondary sources I encountered in Barcelona—will undoubtedly enrich not just the analysis in my “Printing the Cosmopolis” chapter, but the entire book, given its powerful illustration of how Caribbean identities intersected with nineteenth-century print cultures that were not bound by the borders of individual nation states but that circulated in ways scholars are only beginning to explore. Although the new material means I have not been able to complete the chapter, I am confident that situating Bergnes alongside my reading of the existing chapter contents (e.g., the historical fiction published by

Colombian writer Juan Jose Nieto at the offices of the Jamiaca *Gleaner* in the 1840s) will show how important it is for Caribbeanists to break out of existing boundaries in Caribbean studies, and think in panCaribbean terms rather than along the lines of Anglophone, Francophone, and Hispanophone studies.

Finally, with the “luxury” of time granted by the Peterson fellowship, I was able to envision a way to address a suggestion made by the New World Studies series editor at UVA Press to incorporate more Francophone materials into *Caribbean Cosmopolis*. Because the fellowship gave me the time and space to fully re-engage with the project, I found my passion for it reignited. Embracing the challenge to expand the Francophone coverage while emphasizing panCaribbeanness, I came up with the idea of examining the nineteenth-century print culture of New Orleans. New Orleans, as historians (and many residents) understand, was and remains indisputably “Caribbean.” Despite its official status as a US possession following the 1803 Louisiana Purchase, the city’s nineteenth-century print culture reflected its multi-faceted, multi-lingual Caribbean-ness. One particular newspaper, the thrice-weekly *L’Abeille*, was founded by a planter “refugee” from San Domingue (Haiti), Francois Delaup, in 1827. At various points in its nearly 100-year history, *L’Abeille* appeared as a dual-language newspaper (French and English), and for a brief period, 1829-1830, in French, English, and Spanish, making this popular newspaper a promising exemplar of Caribbean cosmopolitanism.

In closing this overly long report, I just want to reiterate how honored I am to have received this RSVP fellowship. The Peterson fellowship is a rare instance of no-strings-attached funding so crucial to maintaining vigorous scholarship, and my appreciation for it can’t be overstated.